

ROY BLAKELEY'S TANGLED TRAIL



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BY PERCY KEESE FITZHUGH

VED BY THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

Roy Blakeley's Tangled Trail

By PERCY KEESE FITZHUGH

When Roy Blakeley rallied his group of tried and true hikers for another idiotic pilgrimage, and exhorted from them a solemn vow that they would *never turn back*, he did not know that the trail they set out to follow formed a complete circle and that they were destined therefore to go on forever. Turning back would do no good for it would lead them nowhere. You must read this sprightly narrative to learn how the hikers escaped from the ghastly doom of walking forever and ever. It would not be a Roy Blakeley story unless there were some girls to be jollied and unless Pee-wee were on hand to furnish laughs to the others. Here also we meet again our old friend Hervey Willets, who gets himself into trouble as usual, and gets himself out again in his customary bizarre fashion. We find indeed, that this particular endless trail leads to a great many places and becomes a tangled trail, opening the way to rural carnivals and frankfurters, and ice cream cones. Roy was never gayer or more carefree than in this amusing narrative of his preposterous adventures in the country which he has taught his readers to know and love.

LOOK ON THE REVERSE SIDE OF THIS JACKET

CHS - (3)_N

John Lloyd Jones
December 25, 1928
from
mother

**ROY BLAKELEY'S
TANGLED TRAIL**



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PEE-WEE WENT DANCING AROUND WAVING THE BURNING
PAPER.
Roy Blakeley's Tangled Trail.

Frontispiece—(Page 74)

ROY BLAKELEY'S TANGLED TRAIL

BY
PERCY KEESE FITZHUGH

AUTHOR OF
THE TOM SLADE BOOKS, THE ROY BLAKELEY
BOOKS, THE PEE-WEE HARRIS BOOKS,
WESTY MARTIN, ETC.

ILLUSTRATED BY
H. S. BARBOUR

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on birch bark. But believe me, paper is good enough, I tried birch bark. But anyway I like birch beer. I'm crazy about root beer too, only it reminds me of cube root and that reminds me of arithmetic.

Maybe you don't know what cube root is; you're lucky. Cube root is the number which taken three times as a factor produces a given number called its cube. I should worry. Because anyway this story isn't about cubes, it's about rubes and boobs and a lot of things and some roots but no cubes. You get those in school and school is closed up or I wouldn't be writing this story.

Anyway I began this story twice. Gee whiz, I thought I was going to strike out. The first time I started with a long description of Temple Camp, and my father said it made him sleepy. Then after I went camping over Sunday I started again, and coffee came out of my fountain pen, and my sister said that a story like that would keep everybody awake, and I told her that's more than some stories do.

So then I cleaned my fountain pen out and started again, and this is my third start, and my

pen's working fine. Only I've got to go downstairs to supper now so I have to end this chapter.

My sister says the place to end chapters is just when something very exciting is happening. But my mother says the place to end them is just when the dinner gong sounds. Anyway to-night we're going to have chocolate pudding and that's exciting so you'll be in suspense while I'm eating chocolate pudding and after that I bet you don't know who you're going to meet.

CHAPTER II

ON THE SHELF

MM, *mmm*, that was good! I remind myself of Pee-wee Harris, eating three helpings. Now I'm going to start.

When I went up to Temple Camp this summer about the first scout I saw was Hervey Willetts. I guess you know that fellow all right. He comes from Massachusetts—as often as he can. That's the place he goes away from.

I'll tell you just where he was sitting. You know how the cooking shack is—it's right at the edge of the lake. Chocolate Drop, he's cook. He's a kind of a whitish black. He's the color of the middle of the night. There's a big window facing the lake and it's got a kind of a big board shutter with hinges on top. The first thing in the morning, Chocolate Drop opens that and props it open with a stick so it sticks out like a kind of a shelf.

Hervey Willetts was sitting on that board shelf.

If Chocolate Drop had taken the prop away Hervey Willetts would have gone into the lake. But that was just what he wanted. He was just sitting there waiting for Chocolate Drop to let down that shutter. Then he could say that he didn't go into the lake after five o'clock because that's against the rule. He could say he was sitting on shore and Chocolate Drop dumped him into the lake. That way he could get a swim in the evening. He didn't say so, but I know that fellow. He would get a swim accidentally on purpose.

He was sitting there with nothing on but an old pair of khaki trousers and a khaki shirt and that crazy hat he always wears with the brim all gone and the crown all full of holes and campaign buttons and things. Gee whiz, you can always tell him by that hat. I could see him sitting there as we rowed across the lake from the trail side—that's the way we always go.

I shouted, "Look who's here."

He called back, "I'm looking; it's just as unpleasant for me as it is for you."

"The pleasure is mine," I told him. "I suppose you think you're going to get a swim after hours without getting called for it."

"That shows your evil mind," he said. "I was watching the sun go down."

"Yes, and waiting to go down yourself," I told him. "I'm waiting to see the scout go down. I always hated geography but there's one thing I like about Massachusetts and that is that you're away from there. I suppose you've got some new stunts this summer."

"Hurry up and land," he said, "and get through with your suppers. Supper was over an hour ago."

He said that because he knew that Chocolate Drop wouldn't let down that shutter till the last supper was over and everything was cleared up in Cooking Shack. Then he would be dumped into the lake accidentally. *Christopher*, but the trustees never seemed to get wise to Hervey Willetts. He looked awful funny sitting up there on that kind of a shelf all ready to be, you know, preciprocated or precipitated or whatever you call it, I should worry.

All of a sudden there was a voice from the Mammoth Cave in the other rowboat. "Let's foil him," said Pee-wee. "Just for fun let's keep on eating for a couple of hours till he's called to

camp-fire. That'll keep Chocolate Drop in the shack."

"Listen to the famine talking," I said.

"He can even hold a heavy shutter up an hour or so with a half a dozen pieces of pie," said Warde Hollister.

"You should worry about our suppers," I told him. "We always take our time eating. We expect to spend a couple of hours at the board and you can spend a couple of hours on *that* board."

"Maybe even we'll eat four desserts," Pee-wee shouted.

"We've got to unpack our baggage first," I called, "and then wash up and go and say hello to Uncle Jeb and in about half an hour we'll get around to eating."

"After that we don't know how long we'll take," Pee-wee yelled.

"Sure, a scout is thorough," shouted Westy from my boat.

"What's that got to do with me?" Hervey asked.

"Oh, positively, absolutely nothing," I said. "Far be it from me to say you have any——"

"Exterior motives," shouted Pee-wee.

"Ulterior motives," I said. "Only I'm just telling you that maybe it will be a large collection of hours before the window of the cooking shack is closed up for the night. So don't worry about falling into the water—yet. We'll tell you in time."

"What do you mean, you'll tell me in time?" said Hervey, very innocent like.

Jiminy, he looked awful funny sitting up there on that window board with his knees drawn up, staring at us just as if he was puzzled to know what we were driving at. Insulted, kind of. That was him all over. Sort of careless like. You'd never think he had any plans at all. He never broke any rules on purpose—oh, far be it from it!

"Got any new songs this summer?" Warde Hollister shouted at him. Because he always had a lot of crazy stuff that he was always singing and that's why everybody called him the wandering minstrel. None of us ever knew where he got all the stuff he sang.

He'd come wandering into camp late for supper twirling that funny cap of his on the end of a stick and singing, and the trustees or Uncle Jeb or maybe his scoutmaster who would be all ready

with a good calling-down would just kind of smile and say nothing. The stormy petrel, they called him that too. Gee whiz, nobody could help liking that fellow. He was an odd number, I'll say that.

"All right, Hervey," Westy called kind of good-natured like. Westy never breaks any camp rules, but just the same he likes Hervey. "Go on, give us a song."

So then Hervey started singing that crazy song that got us into so much trouble that summer. We couldn't hear the end of it, because pretty soon we were at the landing and everybody was crowding there to meet us. Anyhow this is the way it started:

"When you go on a hike just you mind what I say,
The right way to go is the opposite way.

If you come to a cross-road don't make a mistake,
Choose a road and the *other's* the one you should take.

Don't bother with sign boards but follow this song,
If you start on the right road you're sure to go wrong.

You can go on your feet, you can go on a bike,
But the right way is wrong when you start on a hike."

CHAPTER III

HERVEY AND THE CAMP

I DON'T know, it seemed kind of natural, sort of, for us to see Hervey Willetts like that, away from all the other scouts at camp. I said to Westy I was kind of glad we saw him first just the way we did and that he wasn't in the crowd at the landing.

Westy said the same thing. I don't know why he said that, but it seemed as if Hervey was different from everybody else; I guess that's what we were thinking. Most always he was alone.

He had lots and lots of friends, but they weren't scouts at camp. He knew all the farmers around the country, and sometimes he stayed at their homes all night. He got acquainted with peddlers and tramps and stayed away and, gee whiz, you couldn't blame the trustees for getting mad. He was funny in some ways.

He could do most anything, but yet he never

bothered his head about merit badges. Mr. Ellsworth (he's our scoutmaster) said Hervey was an adventurer, not a scout. He said he could do stunts, but he could never do tests. Mr. Ellsworth said scouting is a kind of a harness, and Hervey couldn't wear a harness. Anyway, just the same he liked Hervey because he just couldn't help it.

I had to laugh to myself when I thought how he was sitting on that shutter just waiting for it to be let down so he could have a swim after hours. He could say he fell in and had to swim to the landing. If anybody would be to blame it would be Chocolate Drop, who always let the shutter down from the inside.

I was wondering how Hervey got out there on that shutter. He must have climbed over the roof of the cooking shack and let himself down on the side over the lake. I had to laugh when I thought how funny it would look when the shutter was let down to see him go sprawling accidentally on purpose into the lake, which would be just what he wanted. I knew he intended to beat the rule, but gee, I couldn't help seeing the funny side of it.

But anyway, soon we forgot all about it on account of the scouts all being at the landing to meet us. I guess every scout I ever saw at Temple Camp was there. Bert Winton was there and Brent Gaylong. He was just as lanky as ever, and his spectacles were half-way down his nose like a schoolmaster, and he had that same slow, drawly, funny way about him.

There's always a big fuss when our troop gets to camp, because Mr. Temple, who started the camp, lives in our town. Pee-wee says Mr. Temple donated the camp, and he thinks that means he supplied it with doughnuts. The reason why Mr. Temple doughnuted the camp is because he was interested in Tom Slade when Tom was a hoodlum in our town.

Tom Slade used to be in our troop, but now he stays at Temple Camp all the time, and he's assistant manager under Uncle Jeb Rushmore, and Uncle Jeb used to be a trapper, and he fought with General Custer, and Pee-wee thinks that General Custer was named after cup custards, and General Custer fought the Indians, and if it wasn't for the Indians we wouldn't have any Indian pudding, and that's my favorite dessert.

So that brings me to the part where we were all eating dessert that first night we got to Temple Camp. Everybody was through supper and we had the eats pavilion all to ourselves on account of it being too dark to eat at the big mess-board out under the trees.

I guess you know all about the troop I'm in. It's the first Bridgeboro troop of Bridgeboro, New Jersey. If you want to know where New Jersey is, it's on page twenty-seven of the geography.

These are the three patrols in our troop, and about twice a minute Pee-wee starts another one. But don't pay any attention to the patrols he starts, because they don't amount to anything. The only warranted, genuine patrols in our troop are the raving Ravens (he's one of them, I mean he's about six of them) and the Elks and the Silver Foxes. I'm patrol leader of the Silver Foxes.

The best thing about the Ravens is that they're not Elks. And the best thing about the Elks is that they're not Ravens. And the worst thing about the Silver Foxes is that they're in the same troop with the Elks and the Ravens—they're more to be pitied than blamed. Temple Camp is

at Black Lake and Black Lake is in the Catskills, and the Catskills are somewhere or other, I should worry, you reach them in the second grade, that's all I know.

So now you know about Hervey Willetts and my troop and Temple Camp, and if you want to know all the rest about them you'll find it in a lot of stories I wrote that have my picture on the cover of them. All those stories are crazier than each other. But if you want to read the craziest one of all you want to read this one. Even the laughing brook at Temple Camp died laughing.

It's such a lot of nonsense that it's dedicated to a crazy quilt. Every bit of it is taken from life, and my sister says life ought to be thankful to get rid of it. Many thanks, I told her. Anyway, I don't care what you say, this story is all about real happenings—real adventures and real estate. *Oh, boy*, wait till you see the real estate that's in it.

CHAPTER IV

TRACKS

WHILE we were finishing our supper Chocolate Drop came in and talked to us and told us all the news. We kept him there talking just to make Hervey wait. Pee-wee kept on eating.

"I'm doing it just for the fun of it," he said with his mouth full of pie.

"You mean you're doing it just for the taste of it," I told him.

"I'm prvntngscoutfromrules," he said.

"Your carbureter's flooded," I told him.

"I'm preventing a scout from breaking the rules," he said.

"That's better," Westy told him.

I knew Hervey wouldn't slide off the shutter while it was up, and I knew that Chocolate Drop wouldn't let it down as long as we were eating, and I knew Pee-wee wouldn't stop eating as long as there was anything left to eat. I knew Pee-wee would win if his ammunition held out.

After a while he began eating apple sauce, and then I knew there was no hope for Hervey. Because Pee-wee eats apple sauce better than anything else; you'd think he was a presti—a presti—diget—I should worry, you know what I mean, the way he makes it disappear—I mean a man that does tricks, a magician, or whatever you call him.

We were all sitting around watching him eat apple sauce, Chocolate Drop and all. I mean Chocolate Drop was sitting around watching with the rest of us. He wasn't eating Chocolate Drop, far be it from it absolutely nevertheless. We were all laughing, thinking about Hervey sitting out there on that window shutter waiting for a chance to break the rule by an unavoidable cat—you know what I mean—a catas—something like an accident. Hervey was waiting for the apple sauce to stop going down so *he* could go down.

All of a sudden who should come strolling into the room but Brent Gaylong. He's kind of long and lanky, and he wears spectacles, and he's awful funny on account of being so sober. He takes everything as it comes, the same as Pee-wee does

when he's eating. He just kind of strolled over to the table and lifted the hanging lamp off its rack and marched out with it.

He said, "You fellows don't need this."

So there we sat in total darkness—I just happened to think of that word *total*, but anyway I don't like it because it reminds me of arithmetic.

"We need this lamp to investigate some heavy tracks," Brent said.

Gee whiz, you should have seen us all jump up, even Pee-wee. Because tracks are our middle name. We all started following Brent out and it looked awful funny, that parade with him at the head of it, carrying the lamp. He's awful funny, that fellow is, on account of being so sober. He looks just as if school was opening or something like that.

Now I told you we're all crazy and I'm going to prove it because we just followed him around just like when you play follow your leader.

"Where are the tracks?" Pee-wee wanted to know. I guess he was beginning to be sorry that he had left the apple sauce.

"Right down by the shore," Brent said.

"Did you say they're heavy tracks?" the kid wanted to know, all excited. "I bet they're from a bull moose."

"They're the heaviest tracks I ever saw," Brent said. He looked awful funny carrying that big lamp. He said, "I thought you fellows would be willing to cut short your suppers to see them. They're down by the shore."

"It's a moose," Pee-wee shouted. "He went there to drink."

"If we can pick them up——" Brent started to say.

"I'll pick them up," Pee-wee shouted.

"And hold them——" Brent started again.

"I can pick up any tracks and hold them even on hard land," Pee-wee said. "Don't you know I've got the pathfinder's badge?"

"He's got so many badges he's got the badger beat," I said.

"Well, here they are," Brent said.

By that time we had come to the shore and there in front of us were a couple of pieces of railroad track about a foot long each. They were the same two pieces that had always been there; they used to be used for anchors in the rowboats.

Every scout in camp knew about those two rusty old pieces of railroad track.

Brent said, very sober like, "What do you think of them? Is it a bull moose?"

"They look more like the tracks of a pig," I said; "they're pig iron."

"You said you could pick up any tracks and hold them," Westy said to Pee-wee. "Let's see you do it."

"You make me tired!" the kid yelled. "I stopped eating apple sauce on account of you."

"You would have had to stop some time," Brent said.

"No, I wouldn't," the kid shouted.

I said, "You should have known what he meant when he said 'heavy tracks.'"

"You make me tired," he said; "you didn't know either."

"Sure we knew," I said. "You're so dumb you think a railroad track is made by a bull moose. You desert your dessert and you've got your just deserts, and if there's anything we're sorry for we're glad of it."

"You're all crazy!" Pee-wee yelled.

Just then, *bang*, down went the window shutter

of the cooking shack and then *kerplash* we heard Hervey go tumbling into the water. *Some accident!*

"Any one hurt?" Brent called out very surprised like.

"No, I just fell into the water," Hervey spluttered.

"Too bad," said Brent.

I just looked at Brent and laughed. All the while he looked very sober and innocent.

I said, "You didn't do a thing but help Hervey out."

"You mean he helped Hervey *in*," Warde Hollister said.

"I? What do you mean?" Brent asked us.

"You had a conspiracy to circumvent my apple sauce," the kid screamed; "*I* know. You can't fool me. You just deliberately on purpose stopped me from eating so Hervey Willetts could fall in the water, and you want us to think that you're very innocent with your heavy tracks, but anyway I bet my appetite is just as heavy, and I could have prevented him from falling in the lake only you stopped me."

"I don't know what you're talking about,"

Brent said, very surprised and innocent. Gee whiz, he and Hervey Willetts are some pair. They've got Bartlett pears beaten twenty ways.

"You don't mean to tell me I'd aid and abet anybody in breaking a rule, do you?" Brent said.

"Oh, positively, absolutely not," I said. "Say not so. It just happened thusly as it were by an unforeseen accident that was planned out. You're one good fellow, Brent, you're always helping somebody."

"I don't know what you mean," Brent said.

"You don't mean he helped *me*, do you?" our young Mammoth Cave wanted to know.

"Didn't you have helpings enough to-night?" I asked him.

CHAPTER V

PLANS

So that was about all that happened that night, only that crazy song that Hervey sang when we first saw him, and Brent Gaylong marching ahead of us out of the eats pavilion is what put it into our heads to have a crazy hike like the Bee-line hike, only crazier.

My sister said it ought to be called light fiction on account of Brent carrying the lamp, and my father said it ought to be a serial story on account of there being a lot of oatmeal in it, but anyway, the right name of it is *The Lunatic Hike or Boy Scouts on the Other Road*. Only you're not supposed to use the right name because everything in this story is wrong and you're supposed to use the wrong name and that is *The Left-handed Hike or Where Are We At?* Because the wrong name is the right name and it's affectionately dedicated to five cents' worth of peanuts on account of all the characters in it being nuts.

When Hervey came out of the water he went up to dry himself at camp-fire. Everybody said it was too bad he fell into the water, and Mr. Alton (he's one of the trustees) said that the window shutter of the cooking shack wasn't a very good place to be sitting watching the sunset. Gee whiz, you never know just what that man means when he says something.

Brent said, "Accidents will happen."

"Anyway the rest of the apple sauce was saved from a horrible death," I said.

Now kind of on account of what happened that night, Hervey and Brent and Pee-wee and Warde Hollister and I sat together at camp-fire. We kind of made a little group by ourselves back from the crowd. It was darker back there, and we liked it better. That's the way with Hervey, he always sprawls around away from the crowd.

I said, "I tell you a good kind of a hike—a spook hike; with Brent going ahead carrying the lamp. 'A hike in the pitch dark.'"

"This isn't Hallowe'en," Warde said. "What was that stuff you were singing, Hervey, when we came across the lake to-night a little while before your——"

"Your mishap," Brent said.

"That's the word—*mishap*," I said. "You took the word out of my mouth."

"He didn't take it out of your mouth at all," Pee-wee said. "You just think it's smart to say that."

"No one could ever take anything out of *your* mouth, that's one sure thing," I told him. "What was that you were singing?" I asked Hervey.

"It goes with a hike," Hervey said.

"Let it go," Warde said. "You won't catch *me* going."

"Or me either," our young hero piped up. "Not with Hervey Willetts. Not if it's one of those follow-your-leader hikes."

"This is different," Hervey said. "The song explains it. It's simple, all you have to do is turn to the left. Don't pay any attention to the roads on the right, but turn into every road that goes to the left. And you're sure to get there."

"Where?" the kid hollered.

"Anywhere," I said. "Can't you understand plain English?"

"Anywhere isn't a place," the kid shouted.

"That shows how much you know about geography," I told him. "It's the best place in the world. You're so dumb you think that a plot in a story is where the grass grows. You don't even know where a place is. Proceed with the singing," I said to Hervey.

"And get it over with," Warde said.

So then Hervey sang that crazy song again, lying on his back and kicking that crazy hat of his from one foot to the other. Here it is because, gee whiz, I'll never forget it:

"When you go on a hike just you mind what I say,
The right way to go is the opposite way.

If you come to a cross-road don't make a mistake,
Choose a road, and the *other's* the one you should take.

Don't bother with sign boards but follow this song,
If you start on the right road you're sure to go wrong.

You can go on your feet, you can go on a bike,
But the right way is wrong when you start on a hike."

Brent said in that funny, drawly way he has,
"I rather like that song. It hasn't any object."

"It hasn't any subject or predicate either," I said. "All the injunctions are qualified by the propositions."

"You mean *conjunctions* and *prepositions*," Pee-wee yelled. "That shows how much you know about grammar."

"It's the geography of the song that I like," Brent said. "I'd like to go there."

"Where?" the kid asked.

"To the left," Brent said. "I've heard there's a lot of fun there." He was lying on his back looking right up into the sky, and his hands were clasped behind his head. He seemed awful funny—sober like.

"Well, you can bet I'm not going there," Pee-wee said.

"Well, that's one good thing about the place anyway," I told him. "If what you say is true there ought to be a lot of fun there."

"If what did I say is true?" the kid shouted.

"That you're not going there," I said.

"How can I not go to a place when I don't know where it is?" he yelled.

"That's the right question to the answer," I said. "I say, we five start to-morrow morning.

It won't take us long because if we don't know where we're going we ought to be back by some time or other."

"Oh, long before that," said Brent.

"You're all crazy!" Pee-wee yelled.

"Now you're talking sense," I said.

CHAPTER VI

WE START

So the next morning the five of us started out. We were a kind of a rainbow patrol because we belonged to different troops. But anyway we were all scouts—especially Hervey Willetts, because he's an out-and-out scout on account of being out all the time.

The only one of us that was normal was Warde; he's so normal that he's going to the State Normal School, only when he's with us he's crazy because it's catching.

The first trouble we had just before we started was really just after we started, because when we passed Commissary Shack we were going to stop and have them put us up a lunch, but Hervey said we were on the path to the main road and Commissary Shack was on our right, and we had no right to stop there.

"We haven't started yet," Pee-wee shouted.

"We don't start till we get to the road; we're still in camp!"

"Who's still?" I asked him. "It's the first time I ever knew you to be still. We're on the path leading to the main road. If you leave the path you're out of the hike. On this hike we have no right to pay any attention to anything that's right. We can only turn into roads to the left and we can't pay any attention to things on the right-hand side of those roads—only the left. There isn't any right at all on this hike. We're only supposed to see out of our left eyes."

"Do you mean to tell me I have to **keep my right eye shut?**" Pee-wee shouted.

"And your mouth too," I told him.

"Now I *know* you're all crazy!" he yelled.

"Right," I said.

"You mean left," Hervey put in.

Brent said, "Before we go any farther let's settle about the rules."

Hervey said, "The idea is to turn into every road we come to that goes to the left; that's the only rule."

"And we mustn't pay any attention to anything

that's on the right-hand side of the left-hand road," I said.

"Absolutely, positively," Warde said.

"How are we going to get back?" the kid wanted to know. "Do you think I want to spend the rest of my life turning to the left?"

"If you're going to spend the rest of your life turning, the left is just as good as the right," I told him. "Those are the two best directions except the one you usually go in, and that's up in the air."

"You'll be sorry we didn't take lunch with us," he said.

"I'm sorry already," I told him, "but duty is duty; we can't start off by turning to the right, lunch or no lunch. Better starvation than dishonor. Anyway here comes Sandwich, let's take him along."

Now I'll tell you about Sandwich. He's the dog at Temple Camp, and we call him Sandwich because he's half-bred. Nobody knows how he got to Temple Camp, but a lot of scouts say he followed Hervey Willetts from Catskill. If he did he must have had some job. He's a sort of blackish white. It's good his tail is at the other

end of him, because it would make him nervous to see it. Anyway he should worry. So as long as he was going to go anyway we invited him.

All of a sudden, just as we were turning into the West Trail around the lake (because that turns out of Cabin Lane to the left) a scout called after Hervey Willetts and said, "Hey, Hervey, you're wanted within."

"Can you beat that?" Hervey wanted to know, all disgruntled.

"You better go back," I said, because I know he doesn't think much about not paying any attention to trustees and people like that.

"Within where?" he called out.

"Within the next six or seven hours," the scout shouted.

"No sooner said than stung," I told Hervey.

That fellow's always afraid he'll be called down as many times as I get called up, because I know a girl in Catskill—that's about ten miles from camp—and she's all the time calling me up to go and play basket-ball. Pee-wee has no use for basket-ball, but he's crazy about basket lunches.

So long, I've got to go to scout meeting now.

When I get home I'm going to start chapter seven. And when you start reading it you want to look out not to get too near the edge, because there's all water in that chapter. It's kind of like a lake surrounded by a chapter—you'll see.

CHAPTER VII

THE FALL OF SCOUT HARRIS

Now this is the way we started. We went through Cabin Lane (that's part of Temple Camp) and passed Commissary Shack and turned into the first path to the left and that's West Trail, and it goes around the lake through the woods.

Pee-wee said, "Now it shows how crazy you all are because this trail will bring us right back to where we started, and if we start again we'll only do the same thing over again, and we might just as well try to get somewhere on a merry-go-round."

"That's a very good idea," I told him; "a merry-go-round hike, I never thought of that."

"What's the use just going around and around the lake all the time?" he shouted. "Do you call that a hike?"

"When we get back we can say we've been around a lot," Brent said.

"And what are we going to do when we get back?" the kid yelled.

"Oh, we're just going to keep on going till we find a path to the left," Warde said.

"If there isn't a path to the left the first time there won't be one the second time, will there?" our young hero screamed.

"If you don't succeed at first try, try again," Hervey said. He looked awful funny marching ahead through the woods with the rest of us after him. He looked very serious like, just as if we were really going somewhere. Brent followed along right after him, very sober, with his spectacles half-way down his nose, the way he always wears them. He's long and lanky and always very sober, that fellow is. I mean he acts sober. He said:

"This is just as good as a trip around the world only it's shorter. When you start around the world you don't get anywhere; you just come back to the place where you started. That's because the world is round. If a thing's round and you start around it you can't have any destination. That's logic."



PEE-WEE CLIMBED OUT, SHOUTING, "THIS IS THE LAST
TIME!"

"Absolutely, positively," Warde said. "The equator is all right but it doesn't get you anywhere. This is a round trip, we're encircling the lake."

"How many times are we going to encircle it?" the kid fairly screeched. "You call that logic? Do you think I'm going to keep hiking round and round and round and round the lake all day with nothing to eat? And anyway if there was a path to the left it would run into the lake only there isn't any."

"Well, probably it doesn't run into the lake then," Brent said.

"What are you worrying about? We can't get lost," Warde said to him.

"How is it going to end, that's what *I* want to know?" the kid shouted.

"It isn't going to end," I said; "it's perpetual motion."

Gee whiz, I had to laugh at him. He was trudging along with a scowl on his face, and he looked kind of disgusted with all of us. The funny part of him is that he always goes with *us*, and yet he keeps kicking all the time.

"I suppose you're going to write this up like the other crazy hikes we took," he said. "Everything you do you write a story about it."

I said, "Sure, I remind myself of the Woolworth Building, I have so many stories. Keep to the left." He was just going to turn into a path to the right, but I hauled him back.

We just kept on going along the path around the lake; it was awful funny because we knew it wouldn't get us anywhere. The kid was wild. Pretty soon we came to the outlet of the lake (you can see it on the map), and Hervey jumped across it, then Brent took one of those long steps of his, very solemn, and Warde and I followed. I don't know how Sandwich got across, but he was waiting for us on the other side. He acted as if he knew we were all crazy and liked it. Our young hero tried to take a long step across and, kerflop, down he went into the water. One good thing, it wasn't very deep.

"Going down," Warde said.

"If we're going to keep going around and around this lake till we're all—till we're all walking skeletons," Pee-wee shouted, "I'm going to put a board across that outlet."

"Come on, keep moving," Hervey said; "make it snappy."

"What do you mean, snappy?" the kid screamed. "Do you think I'm going to keep on getting wet every time just because the rest of you are lunatics?" He looked awful funny coming along after us sputtering and shouting, with his scout suit all wet.

"United we stand, divided we sprawl," I told him. "Hervey's leading; if he doesn't use a board the rest of us can't."

"Sprawl is the word," said Brent.

"We're not responsible for the length of your legs," I told the kid. "If you want to be a quitter and drop out when we get around to camp, all right. We're on a left-handed hike and our hike flower is the daffodil and our slogan is *Keep going to the left* and if we don't get anywhere we're not to blame; geography is to blame, and I never had any use for geography anyway."

"We'll get dizzy and go staggering into the lake, that's what we'll do," the kid yelled.

"All right," I said, "drop in or drop out, we don't care which you do, only keep still. Can't you see we're busy hiking?"

CHAPTER VIII

FOILED AGAIN

YOU'LL see how it was if you look at the map. After a little while we came around to the camp again and into Cabin Lane. A lot of scouts were sitting on the porch of Main Pavilion laughing at us. But what cared we, quoth I.

"Didn't you find any path to the left?" one of them shouted.

"No, but maybe there'll be one next time," I said. "You never can tell. We've only been around once. It's a beautiful afternoon this morning for an evening hike. So long, we'll see you later. We're busy doing our daily good turn."

Everybody was laughing as we went through Cabin Lane, Pee-wee coming along behind trying to keep up with us. He was sore but he wouldn't drop out because he's not a quitter, I'll say that much for him.

When we came the second time to the outlet, Hervey made a good jump over it. The rest of us followed, and Pee-wee went kerflop into the water again. He climbed out shouting, "*This is the last time I'm going around!* Do you think I'm going to keep walking around this lake all day?"

"Think of Columbus," Brent said. "He didn't turn back, he kept on going, he sailed on and on and on——"

"That's all right because he didn't know where he was going," Pee-wee panted.

"All right then, we're smarter than he was because we know where we're going," Warde said.

"He kept going around," Brent said. "That's why they named Columbus Circle after him."

"Pee-wee is so dumb he thinks Columbus' last name is Ohio," I said.

Hervey didn't say anything, just kept marching along; gee whiz, it was funny. I don't know how long we would have kept it up because that fellow is crazy enough to do anything.

Pee-wee started screaming, "How long are we going to keep this up? I said I'd go on a left-handed hike, and I meant I'd follow a trail that

goes to some different place. What's the use of doing this? *Where is it going to get us?"*

Brent said, "This isn't the kind of a trail that takes you to one place one time and another place another time. It's a trail you can depend on."

"Sure, it can be trusted," I said.

Gee whiz, I guess we'd be marching around Black Lake yet if it wasn't for Sandwich. He discovered a trail to the left. It was right across the lake from the camp. We were about half-way along the opposite side of the lake when Sandwich started sniffing the ground, and then he began dancing around as if school had just closed. All of a sudden he started sniffing along slantingways down toward the lake; you'll see just how if you look at the dotted line on the map.

"It's a path!" Pee-wee shouted. "It goes to the left and we have to follow it."

"I bet it goes into the lake," Warde said.

"Then what will we do?" I asked him.

"We'll have to walk into the lake and swim to the left," Brent said. "Pee-wee couldn't be any wetter than he is already."

"I'm not going to walk into the lake!" the kid

shouted. "That's one thing I won't do. I'm good and wet, and I'm good and hungry. I got wet twice and I haven't eaten once and it's near noontime and it's all on account of you and your crazy hike. If I have to be a lunatic I'm going to be a dry one!"

"That's a very good idea," I told him.

"I'm half starved, I know that," he shouted.

"I never knew you to be anything else," Warde said.

As long as there wasn't any path to the left along the trail around the lake we decided that we would follow Sandwich and call that a trail. Because if we hadn't done that we would have just kept on going round and round the lake forever—even longer maybe. We would have gone on to eternity, that's what Brent said.

"I'd rather go there than no place," I told him.

"If we don't strike eternity the first time around how do you expect to find it the second time around?" Hervey asked.

"We should worry," I said; "we're on the right road now, we're going to bunk right into the lake."

Well, the next thing we knew there we were

right at the edge of the lake. Across the water we could see Temple Camp and we could see the smoke curling up from the cooking shack and we knew they were cooking dinner over there.

"Now you see," said Pee-wee, very sore like, "they're cooking dinner; they're going to have sausages."

"If the wind would only blow this way we could inhale our dinners," Warde said.

"Oh, here's a boat," one of us shouted.

"We'll row across, that's what we'll do," the kid said. "I've had enough of left-handed hiking. We're in luck. We don't even have to walk the rest of the way around."

"It's chained," said Hervey, "and it's got a big heavy padlock on it."

"Foiled again," I said.

We were all standing on the shore looking at the boat. I said, "It's a very nice boat with a bottom in it and sides to it and everything, only it's chained. What are we going to do next?"

Brent began sniffing and saying, "I think I can smell the sausages. The fragrance is borne upon the gentle breeze. I think I can smell brown **gravy** too. And apple dumplings. Can you sniff

the apple dumplings?" I had to laugh at him, he was so sober about it. He said, "Is that the scent of apple dumplings, kid, or am I mistaken?"

"It smells to me like two helpings," Warde said.

"You all make me tired!" Pee-wee shouted. "What's the use of standing here and sniffing like a lot of idiots? If the boat is chained we have to go on walking around. We can get there in time for dinner if we hurry."

Brent said, "Alas, that can never be done. Thou knowest not what thou sayest, Scout Harris."

"Why don't I knowest what I sayest?" the kid screamed.

"Because you just made a fatal move," Brent said. "In walking around examining the boat you passed to the *north* of the indistinct trail that Sandwich followed. And we, like fools, followed you. We are now facing south as we stand here. Our honor prevents us from turning around. Behold, Scout Harris, the little trail which brought us to the shore is now on our *right* instead of on our *left*. We cannot follow it back to the main trail.

"You, and you alone, have been our undoing! We cannot move from this spot except by entering the lake which is on our *left*, and the boat is chained. We are marooned in fetters. We can neither hike nor row. All we can do is sniff. And this is *your* work!"

CHAPTER IX

THE SOUND OF MERRY LAUGHTER
(*My Sister Wrote That Heading*)

"Now I *know* you're crazy!" Pee-wee yelled.

"The path back to the main trail is on our *right*," Brent said. "We must shun it. Our honor is at stake."

"Don't talk about steaks," Warde said.

"You're a lot of nuts, that's what you are!" Pee-wee yelled.

"Don't remind me of nuts," I said. "Our Cook's Tour has come to an end within sniffing distance of food. And *you* are to *blame*!"

"Please don't use the word cook," Warde said.

"It shows where one false step may lead," Brent said, very solemn like.

"If we turn around that trail is on our left," the kid shouted. "I never said I wouldn't turn around, did I?"

"We are facing the south," Brent said.

"I'm not!" Pee-wee screamed.

"Go your way, Scout Harris," he said, "but remember that you deserted the left-handed hikers by turning to the right. You are taking your first false step. We follow the path of honor."

"Me for the *seat* of honor," I said. "Let's sit down in the boat."

"How long are we going to stay here?" the kid asked. I noticed that he sat down in the boat with us. He isn't a quitter, that's one sure thing.

So then we were all sitting in the boat laughing. We all faced the same way, south, and it made us look awful funny. If we could have rocked the boat around so it headed the other way then the trail might have been on our left, but the boat was fastened at both ends so there we were with the lake to the left of us and the trail (if you call it a trail) to the right of us and how could we get away, that was the question.

I guess you see how it was; if we hadn't moved north of the trail and stood facing south, we could have gone back to the main trail and kept going round. But you see Brent caught us when the little trail was on our right and if you don't see I should worry because I have troubles of my

own. Anyway, there we were sitting in the boat all facing the same way like an audience at a show.

"My honor comes first," Brent said.

"My appetite comes next," Pee-wee said.

"How long are we going to sit here?"

"Till doomsday," I said.

"Till we find some way to turn to the left," said Brent.

"One place is just as good as another, if not better," I said; "anyway we're sitting down."

"There goes the dinner horn," Hervey said.

"Let it go," I said, "that's more than we can do."

"They're going to have clam chowder too, today," Pee-wee said.

"I hear you calling me," Brent began singing.

"We're a lot of fools," Pee-wee said. "All we have to do is get up and hike around to dinner. This left-handed hike is nothing but a lot of nonsense anyway. It's gone far enough."

"Sure it has," I said. "I don't see it going any farther."

So then Hervey began rocking the boat and singing that crazy stuff:

"When you go on a hike just you mind what I say,
The right way to go is the opposite way.

If you come to a cross-road don't make a mistake,
Choose a road, and the *other's* the one you should take.

Don't bother with sign boards but follow this song,
If you start on the right road you're sure to go wrong.

You can go on your feet, you can go on a bike,
But the right way is wrong when you start on a hike."

Gee whiz, I guess we sat there about half an hour. Most of the time we were jollying Pee-wee; that's our favorite outdoor sport. And all the time we were all sitting facing the same way just like an audience. We were kind of lazy like. We felt kind of lazy and silly, I guess.

Warde said, "This is a very nice boat, I like the inside of it better than the outside."

"The outside of it isn't a boat at all," the kid grumbled.

I said, "Well, if it hasn't got an outside how can it have an inside? That shows how much you know about geometry."

"Outside this boat, is that a boat?" he yelled.

"Absolutely, positively," I said. "For good-

ness' sake pick up that rag under your feet and wash your face with it. You brought all the mud from the bottom of the outlet along with you. You look like a mud-pie."

"Will you keep still about pie!" he hollered. "How long are we going to sit here like a lot of fools? Just because we made a crazy resolution——"

"Our honor is at stake," Brent said.

"Look at Sandwich, he went home," the kid grumbled.

"How can I look at him then?" I said. "Anyway he didn't vow any vow."

Then Hervey started singing:

"We vowed a vow,
We vowed a vow,
And now we're marooned on a padlocked scow."

Pretty soon all of us were singing:

"We're here because we're here,
We cannot get away;
The path to the left has turned to the right.
And here we're going to stay,
And here we're going to stay;
For that's the only way."

All of a sudden Hervey shouted, "I've got an idea!" Then he pulled up the stake that was stuck in the water near the stern of the boat. A chain went from the boat to that stake, and there was a padlock, but it wasn't much good when he pulled the stake up. He said, "Ha, ha, we are shaved, I mean saved. This alters the whole face of nature. Just a minute and the trail will be on our left, and the hike can continue along the same lines as before."

"Not for me!" Pee-wee shouted. "I'm sitting here, and I'm going to stay sitting here, I don't care what happens!"

"Well, anyway, take that rag that's under your feet and wash your face with it," I told him.

"I won't do that either," he said; "I'm tired of this whole business. I'm going to stay here till I get good and rested."

All the while we were rocking the boat so it would move around. The bow of it was chained so the stern swung around until the boat bobbed against the shore and was facing north instead of south, just like the boat I made with dotted lines on the map. So you see then the little trail was on our left. Hervey pushed the stake down into

the bottom of the lake so the boat would stay that way.

Brent said, "Thanks to Hervey Willets now we can proceed upon our hike. We haven't been around much lately. Shall we hit the trail?"

"If I hit that trail as I'd like to hit it," Pee-wee shouted. "I'd—I'd—I'd—give it—I'd give it two black eyes——"

"It would be a blind trail," Brent said.

"You can turn to the left and go wherever you want to," the kid shouted. "I'm going to sit right here in this boat, I don't care anything about faces of nature——"

"The least you could do would be to wash your own face," Warde told him.

"I'll wash my hands of you and my face too," the kid hollered. "I'm going to sit right here in this boat till I get good and rested, and then I'm going around to dinner. I resign from this crazy hike and you're all lunatics."

Warde said, "Those are harsh words, Scout Harris."

The kid looked awful funny sitting there in the boat after the rest of us got out. He just sat there with a terrible scowl on his face, and his face

was all grimy on account of falling in at the outlet. He was good and mad.

The rest of us were standing on the shore watching him and we were just going to start up the daffodil trail (that's what Warde called it) and turn to the left when all of a sudden we heard the sound of merry laughter echoing through the woods. My sister wrote that sentence about merry laughter echoing through the woods. I was going to write that we heard a couple of girls giggling somewhere around, I should worry, and that's the end of this chapter.

CHAPTER X

THE PLOT GROWS THICKER—THE MUD TOO

Now there's one thing about Pee-wee, he always dresses up when there are going to be girls. He wears all his merit badges and his belt-axe so they'll know he's a real hero. He's the only original boy scout heart-breaker. Girls always smile at him. Sometimes they even laugh out loud.

So as soon as he heard the merry sound of girlish laughter in the neighboring woodland (my sister wrote that) he began to listen and then he grabbed the rag in the bottom of the boat so as to wash the dirt from his face.

I guess he was going to dip it in the water when all of a sudden, *good night*, there were a couple of girls coming out through the bushes. They were laughing kind of just as if they had been spying on us, but all of a sudden they set up a howl and the next thing I saw there was Pee-wee jumping around in the boat and the boat was rocking

about half full of water. One of his legs was outside, and he didn't seem to know whether to stay in the boat or get out of it. Gee whiz, it wouldn't have made much difference because there was just about as much water inside as there was outside.

"Oh, he pulled the plug out—*the rag!*" one of the girls said. "Isn't that too *funny!*"

"It shows you don't know what funny means," Pee-wee spluttered.

By that time the boat was more than half full and he was flopping around in the water outside it. One good thing, the water was shallow but the bottom was all mud and he was floundering around in it and lifting one leg after the other high up trying to walk up on shore. The water was too shallow to swim in and too deep to walk in especially on account of the muddy bottom. Pretty soon he was on shore all covered with mud, and the rest of us were all standing around screaming.

"He pulled the plug out, he *pulled the plug out!*" one of the girls kept screaming—you know how they do. She said, "I never saw *anything* so excruciating in all my *born days!*" The other girl was laughing so hard she couldn't say a word.

Brent said, "Fair maids, does this boat belong to you?"

One of the girls said, "Yes, does this little boy belong to you? Oh, he's just too funny for anything! We had a rag stuffed into a hole in the bottom of the boat to keep the water from coming in. We're camping just above here. Oh, he's simply covered with mud. You're simply *covered* with mud," she said to Pee-wee.

"Do you think I don't know that?" he spluttered. "I—I found it out as soon as you did."

Brent said very sober like to the girls, "You should have had two holes in the boat, one for the water to come in through and one for it to go out through; then a rag would not be necessary."

"It shows how much you know about scouting," the kid shouted, all the while wiping the mud from his clothes and then transferring it to his face with his hand. "That's just like girls, stopping a hole up with a rag. That might have happened in the middle of the lake only it didn't, and I might have been drowned on account of that rag, only I wouldn't because I know how to swim anyway."

"Oh, isn't he just too cute!" one of the girls said.

"And he knows how to swim," the other said.

I said, "Oh, he's very smart; he knows more than his teacher, that's why she asks him so many questions. Even the head of the Board of Education asked him, 'How are things?' He didn't know, he had to ask Pee-wee. His name is Pee-wee for short."

"He's certainly short enough," one of the girls said.

I said, "He only looks short on account of it being such a short acquaintance. He'll look shorter when you've known him longer."

Brent said, "You say you're camping around here?"

"Are you doing your own cooking and everything?" Pee-wee blurted out.

"And your own eating?" I asked them.

"Yes, but we'd just *love* to have you come and help us do it," one of them said.

"Which? The cooking or the eating?" Pee-wee wanted to know.

One of them said, "Dinner is all ready, we were just going to eat it when we heard voices and we came here to see who it was. And we want you

all to come and help us eat dinner. You know scouts have to be helpful."

"I'm helpful," Pee-wee shouted. "I know all about it."

"He learned about it in the third grade," I said. "It's derived from the Latin word *full* and the Greek word *help*; *helpful* meaning full of helpings. Anything else you'd like to ask him?"

"I'd like to ask you all if you like fish-balls?" she said.

"How many fish-balls?" Pee-wee shouted.

"Can we eat them with our left hands?" Brent wanted to know.

"They're all crazy," Pee-wee said, all excited.

"Not the fish-balls *we* make," the girl said.

"He means us," Brent said. "We are on a left-handed hike, and we can't turn to the right. If the fish-balls are cooked right we can't eat them."

"Don't you pay any attention to them," Pee-wee said, "because over in camp everybody says they're crazy, and they even admit it themselves."

"Suppose some of the fish-balls are left," one of the girls laughed.

"None of them will be," I told her. "A scout's word is to be trusted. Dinner is over at Temple Camp by now so we might accept an invitation if we were properly approached—in a left-handed manner."

"It'll be accepted anyway by me," Pee-wee said; "and I'd like to know what to call you by."

"My name is Marjorie Eaton," one of the girls said.

"He'll be crazy about you," I said; "he's so fond of eatin'."

"And my name's Stella Wingate," the other girl said.

So then Brent introduced all of us to the girls in that funny, sober way he has and told them about our patented left-handed hike. Those girls said they belonged down at Brookside and were just camping for the day. If you want to go to Brookside you just row down the outlet and pretty soon you come to it.

I said, "How far is your camp from here. And can we get to it without turning to the right?"

Marjorie Eaton said, "I don't see how you ever expect to get away from the lake if you keep turning to the left; you'll just go around and around

and around. I think you're all too silly. You'll just go hiking around forever."

Brent said, "You never can tell, they may cut a road to the left some day while we're going around."

"Didn't I tell you they're all crazy?" Pee-wee shouted.

The other girl said, "If you *must* go on with such a *perfectly ridiculous* thing, why don't you give a broad interpretation to your rule?"

"I'd like to give something worse than that to it," the kid shouted.

"A broad interpretation is bad enough," I said. "About how broad should it be?" I asked her.

"Silly," she said. "If you want to get away from the lake——"

"How about the fish-balls?" Pee-wee piped up.

"If you want to get away from the lake," she said, "all you have to do is to pull the boat up on shore and get the water out of it. As you stand looking out on the lake the outlet is up there to the north. *It's to your left.* All you have to do is to row along the shore to your left till you reach the outlet and then row through the outlet till you see a path that leads out of it to your left. That

goes to Shade Valley. How many times have you been marching around this lake for goodness' sake?"

Warde said, "We wouldn't even have reached the shore if it hadn't been for our dog who deserted us and went home to dinner."

"Well, he's the only one of the party who has any sense," Marjorie Eaton said. Then they both began laughing. "It's good you came down to the shore," the other girl said, "because now you see you can use the boat and get somewhere without actually breaking your rule."

"We just have to kind of bend it a little," I said.

"I never knew anything so stupid in my life as boys," Stella Wingate said.

"Especially boys who have been around so much," Brent said.

I said, "Girls, you have saved us from being a merry-go-round; you have shown us a way out. The outlet lets us out the same as it let Pee-wee in. He was in that very outlet, and he never knew its possibilities.

"Possibilities!" Marjorie Eaton began laughing. "Oh, I think he's just *impossible*."

They were awful nice, those girls were. They said they thought it would be all right for us to go up to their camp and have dinner with them and then start for the outlet in the boat. They said they thought that would be turning to the left and that it was the only way for us to get out of our rut. They said our resolution was all right but that sometimes a rule has to be construed freely.

They reminded me of school when they talked. They said our only hope of escape was by the lake. Marjorie Eaton said that otherwise we would be the victims of an eternal circle. Gee whiz, they were smart.

"You mean an infernal circle," I said.

Pee-wee said, "Don't ever talk to me again about anything round; if it's round I have no use for it."

"Oh, we're so sorry," Stella Wingate said. "Then you won't eat any fish-balls."

"Eats don't count," the kid said.

"That's the first time I ever heard you say that," I told him.

So then we all went up to their camp which was about a couple of hundred feet from the shore.

And, oh, boy, those were some fish-balls. They counted with Pee-wee all right, but I lost count of them. Those girls said they had just decided to take a trip into the woods for a lark.

"You can't catch any larks around here," our young hero said, "but there are wild pigeons. I can tell you all about birds, I know all about stalking."

I said, "Don't mind him, he's so dumb he thinks that stalking is named after a stork. He thinks that all the news of the birds is published in the fly-paper."

"Oh, he's just stuck on the fly-paper," Brent said.

CHAPTER XI

AN INTERMISSION

IT WAS nice sitting there under a big tree kind of all jollyng each other and eating fish-balls. We decided that as long as we were so comfortable we would forget about our left-handed resolution for a little while and then go back down to the lake and row to the outlet and take the first road to the left.

"That's the only sensible thing to do," Marjorie said.

"That's what makes me think we shouldn't do it," I told her; "we made a resolution to do everything wrong."

Stella Wingate said. "Well, then, as long as you're not supposed to be sitting here eating fish-balls you might as well do it."

"Sure, that's logic," Pee-wee said. "We can give the fish-balls a broad interpretation, can't we? We can construe—what d'you call it—treat them freely."

"Oh, most conclusively," I said.

"Treat them as freely as you like," Marjorie laughed.

Those girls had a lot of eats in a basket. They had crinkly paper napkins and everything. They had some sewing with them, kind of khaki colored stuff, I don't know what it was. They had a couple of books, too, that they were going to read in the afternoon. Gee whiz, they were awful nice, those girls. Stella Wingate kept making fish-balls in a nice little frying-pan with a wooden handle.

The basket was packed all nice like a trunk. Everything in it had crinkly paper wrapped around it, bottles and everything. Even there were little pinches of salt twisted in crinkly paper. There were hard-boiled eggs in crinkly paper too. Gee whiz, everything was wrapped up just like things around a Christmas tree. Girls are awful funny the way they do things.

Warde said, "Left-handed hikes are all right."

"And we're going to have dessert," Marjorie said. "Stella knows how to make fish-balls, but jelly rolls are *my* masterpiece."

I said, "I think we'd like several pieces of masterpieces."

She said, "Oh, they don't come in pieces, they come in rolls. I'll show you how I make them."

"We'll show you how to eat them," Pee-wee said.

I said, "You must excuse our young hero, he was born during a famine. He likes thunder because it reminds him of rolls. He likes ice because it comes in cakes. He wants to live in Greenpoint because he thinks it's the end of a pickle."

"How do you make these jelly rolls?" Warde asked her.

She said, "Oh, you'll see. They're made of pie crust; they look like ice cream cones only they're filled with jam instead."

"Yum, yum," I said.

"How many are you going to make?" Pee-wee wanted to know.

She said, "As many as you can eat."

I said, "Thou knowest not what thou sayest, girl."

She said, "We've got a whole big bag of flour and two cans of jam, and we're going to make *oceans* of them."

"Atlantic or Pacific oceans?" Pee-wee piped up.

She said, "After lunch we always make a big boxful of them, just heaping over, and then we just lie back and rest and read aloud and *gorge* ourselves. We do that every Saturday. We come out in the woods and have a perfectly *scrumptuous* time. And we don't go home till the jelly cones are all gone."

Brent said, "We'd even be willing to listen to you read if you'll let us in on that."

Stella Wingate said, "You're perfectly horrid."

Brent asked them, "Are you reading the Dolly Dimple Series?"

Marjorie said, "No, we're not reading the Dolly Dimple Series, Mr. Freshy. We're reading *Treasure Island*, so there."

"Jelly cones don't go with *Treasure Island*," I said.

"Oh, yes, they do, you'll see them go," Stella said.

"She's right," Pee-wee shouted; "because the more excited you get the faster you eat. *Treasure Island* is better than Dolly Dimple for eating those things—jelly cones. And anyway scouts have to be loyal and we'll stick to you till they're all gone and besides that I've read *Treasure Island* so I

don't have to listen if I don't want to, I can just eat. Gee, I want to see you start making them because if they're kind of disguised as ice cream cones I bet they're good."

"Listen to starving Russia," I said. "He's so dumb he thinks Cook's Tours are named after a chef."

CHAPTER XII

GIRLS AND WASPS

ALL the while Hervey Willetts was lying on his back looking up in the air and not saying anything. When he can't be moving he's as still as a ghost. He was kind of kicking his hat from one foot to the other. All of a sudden he started something—that was just like him. That fellow can start something lying on his back. He said, "Oh, look at the wasps' nest up there in the tree."

Gee whiz, you should have seen those girls jump. Right then we all noticed that there were wasps flying around above us and in and out of the big nest. It was a great big nest, as big as a watermelon and the entrance to it was underneath; it was a hole about as big round as a quarter.

Hervey said, "Give me a stick and I'll knock it down and we'll have a game of football with it while we're waiting for the jelly cones, or whatever you call them."

"In quest of adventure," Brent said, "we've

all been stung once to-day following you and that's enough. If you want to take it down lift it down carefully and pour the wasps out first. Then we can take a few kicks at it.

Warde said, "It has kick enough in it, let it alone. It has too much of a kick in it for me."

Then up jumped our young hero. "You don't catch me doing any kicking," he shouted.

"I'm glad to hear that; you've been kicking ever since we started," I told him.

"Shall I knock it down and see what happens?" Hervey said. It was awful funny to see him lying there on his back and making believe to try and reach it with his foot. All the while the wasps were flying in and out of it and kind of hanging around the doorway.

By that time the girls were crazy, picking things up all excited and getting ready to move away. "Come away, don't *touch* it; oh, don't *touch* it whatever you do!" they were crying.

Marjorie Eaton knocked the lunch basket over and spilled everything out of it, she was in such a hurry. They both started picking things up and kept kind of edging away from the tree all the time. I had to laugh to see how they'd sneak up

on tiptoe and pick up something and then go scooting away with it and sneak back for something else. The stuff was all over the ground, and they crept around groping for it all the while looking very scared like at the tree.

Hervey didn't pay any attention to them, just lay there on his back looking up at the big nest. He said, "I tell you what let's do; let's take it down and see how far we can roll it."

"A game of one o' cat would be better," Brent said, very sober. "The first one to knock a home run will get six jelly rolls to begin with. Only we'll have to bat at it left-handed."

"Oh, absolutely, most conclusively," I said.

"And when we run we'll turn to the left," Warde piped up.

"That's understood," Hervey said.

"I think it would be better to toss it gently," Brent said. "I'll lift it down and throw it to Miss Eaton, she'll throw it to Warde, he'll throw it to Miss Wingate, she'll throw it to Pee-wee——"

"Not gently," I said.

"By that time," Brent said, "the wasps will be dizzy; they'll be so seasick that they'll tumble right out through the hole, and we can hold a plate of

jam to catch them in. They'll stick in the jam while they're in a state of como, or coma, or whatever you call it, and we'll capture them all by one master-stroke."

Warde said, "You got that idea from the best way to kill flies by hanging a slippery cord above a plate of ice cream. The fly alights on the cord, slides off into the ice cream and freezes to death."

Brent said, "I've heard of that but it's cruel and scouts don't use it. In the seasick method the wasp is rendered unconscious first and he never knows he's dead till afterwards. He dies in the jam, an ideal death. Even Pee-wee will admit that."

Warde said, "I should think the wasps would be stuck on that—or in it."

"That's just it, they are," Brent said. "Now, all form a circle while I lift it down." He made believe to reach for it and, oh, boy, I wish you could have seen those girls run. When they got about fifty feet away they stood hugging each other and screaming.

"By doing that you'll only wake the wasps up," Warde said to them. "This is just the time they take their afternoon nap."

CHAPTER XIII

"THE SHIVELLER"

JUST then our brave young hero went up in the air. "You think you're smart frightening girls, don't you!" he shouted. "Don't you know a scout has to be a shiveller——"

"What's that?" I asked him.

"He has to have chivalry," he said. "Maybe you think it's funny frightening girls about pouring wasps——"

I said, "It doesn't hurt them a bit, it's absolutely painless—endorsed by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals."

"You mean the Society for the Prevention of Lunatics!" he yelled. "It shows how much you know about scouting and resource and things like that——"

Brent said, "Resource? Is that any relation to apple sauce?"

"It's a relation to scouting," the kid yelled.

"It's something like cranberry sauce," I said.

"Don't you be afraid," Pee-wee called to the girls; "I told you they were crazy."

"Oh, make them stop! Don't let them do it!" the girls shouted. They stood away off about fifty feet from the tree looking at it kind of terrified. All the while wasps were buzzing around the nest and Hervey was making believe to kick it.

"Don't you be scared," Pee-wee called to them, "because I know a way, I've got resources, that's more than they have; they're only trying to scare you."

"Oh, don't let them *touch* it!" Marjorie cried. "Don't go near it, please, *please* don't! Bring the things away, and we'll go somewhere else—please."

Hervey said, "If we turn that nest upside down the wasps won't know where they are when they come out; they'll be lost and they'll lose their morale."

Marjorie called, "Oh, no, no, *no, no*, they won't lose it. Don't go near it—*please!*"

"Don't you mind them," Pee-wee shouted. "I know a regular scout way to do."

"Don't go near it," the girls shouted. "They're buzzing all around!"

"You leave them to me," Pee-wee said, very brave. "I'll fix it."

I didn't know what kind of an idea he had in his head, but I thought it must be something he had read in the Handbook or somewhere or other. He gets his stunts direct from the factories—manufacturer to consumer. He took three or four crinkly napkins that had blown all over the ground and lighted them with a match. Then he began waving them around. "See them all go in?" he shouted. "The flame scares them into their nest."

Gee whiz, it was true, I'll say that. All the wasps that were out beat it for their nest as fast as they could fly. Pee-wee went dancing around waving the paper till it began burning his hands.

"Oh, isn't that just *wonderful!*" one of the girls called.

"That's nothing," said Pee-wee, all the while reaching around on the ground; "the next thing I have to do quick; then everything will be all safe."

I didn't know what he was hunting for, all I knew was he was groping around for something. I guess he didn't know himself what he was groping for. He knew the girls were watching him, and he liked himself a lot on account of being such a

hero with his resources. That's his favorite outdoor sport, being a hero in front of girls.

"What are you going to do now?" I asked him.

But he didn't pay any attention only kept groping until his hand hit on something he thought might do. I couldn't see exactly what it was, it looked kind of shiny. Anyway he marched boldly up to the nest and stood on tiptoes and pushed the thing into the hole so it stuck there. "Now they're all in and none of them can get out," he said; "they're sealed in. You can come back now, you needn't be scared because I fixed it."

CHAPTER XIV

HANDS OFF

"COME on back, you don't have to be scared any more," the kid shouted.

"Some hero," I said.

"He's a regular *women and children first* scout," Hervey said.

"Oh, they come before that with him," said Warde.

"He charmed them with fire," Brent said.

"They're afraid of flame," the kid said, very proud. "That's something scouts are supposed to know about. They're supposed to know how to do more than just talk."

"The pleasure is ours," I said. "You lose and we win as you usually do if not oftener. Actions are better than words."

By that time the two girls were coming back, very slow and careful-like.

"Are you *sure* it's all right?" Marjorie asked us.

"Positively guaranteed," I said. "Sir Harris drove them before him. He's the only original boy scout shiveller. He shivelled them in with a shovel of fire. He's the pried piper of Temple Camp, named after a mince pie. Behold the land is freed from wasps!"

The girls came back ever so careful. "Are you sure there are none around?" they asked us. I guess they thought they could protect each other from wasps by hanging onto each other.

Brent said, "We can now pick things up and proceed with the jelly cones."

"Are you sure they can't get out?" Stella Wingate wanted to know. They were getting a little easier in their minds, I could see that. "You are all too silly for anything," she said. "Pee-wee *acted* while you *talked*. And I believe that *you*, Mr. Hervey, or whatever they call you, would have been just headstrong enough to knock it down. I suppose *that's* what you would have called one of your *feats*."

I said, "Sure, he's very headstrong with his feet. How about the eats that you were going to cook when we were rudely interrupted by the flying corps?"

"I am going to make as many jelly cones as Pee-wee can eat, so there," said Marjorie. "Because he's the hero of the day."

"He's the hero of every day," Brent said, "and the nights as well. Wait till you see him annihilate the jelly cones."

Marjorie said, "Well, he's going to have the chance because he deserves it. But are you sure the wasps can't get out?" she asked us.

"Not as long as that plug stays in," Pee-wee said. "But if anybody took it out——"

"Good gracious!" Marjorie said.

"We wouldn't *touch* it," Stella put in, just shuddering.

"Then they'd come out good and mad," Pee-wee said. "They'd be mad because I circumvented them. See? But as long as it stays in there they're foiled."

"Just the same as if it were sealed with tinfoil," I told her.

"Do you all promise not to touch it?" Stella asked us.

"Because I won't be responsible for what they do, they're all crazy," Pee-wee said.

"They've got to *promise*," Marjorie said. "Do

you promise, Mr. Hervey Headstrong?" she asked.

"Why pick on *me*?" Hervey asked her, all the while lying on his back with his hands behind his head, kind of careless like.

She said, "Because you have a look in your eye. I just feel you're going to do something *tragic*. I can just *feel* it in my *bones*. Girls are good at reading characters. I know your type."

"Make Roy Blakeley promise," Pee-wee said, all the while strutting around very important, sort of, "because he's the worst of the lot."

Marjorie Eaton said, "Mr. Tall Boy with the spectacles, will you give your solemn word of honor——"

"As a scout," Pee-wee shouted.

"As a scout," Marjorie said, "will you give your solemn word of honor and cross your heart and hope to die that *none* of these boys will *touch* that wasps' nest—will you?"

"Why pick on me?" Brent said.

"Because you have spectacles and I *feel* that you're honorable—I just *feel* it," she said. "Will you promise for all of them including Willis, or whatever that crazy boy's name is who lies on his

back, will you promise that not *a single, solitary one of you* will touch that wasps' nest? Because I won't make a single jelly cone till you do."

"Make him raise up his hand in the scout salute and promise," said Pee-wee. "Because I know that bunch; I've been out with them before."

Brent said, "Will you girls promise to make as many jelly rolls as we can eat in half an hour?"

She said, "Why, *of course* we will, we've got oceans of flour."

"Then we agree," he said. "On behalf of the Boy Scouts of Temple Camp we pledge ourselves one and all separately and collectively——"

"And unanimously," Pee-wee shouted. "Make 'em do it unanimously."

"And conclusively and finally," Brent said, "and thoroughly and left-handedly."

"No, not left-handedly," Pee-wee shouted. "I had enough of that."

"We promise," Brent said. "No scout hand shall touch that wasps' nest. It shall remain as it is, a monument to the resourcefulness and heroism of P. Harris."

"Now will you start to cook the jelly cones?" Pee-wee wanted to know. "Because, gee whiz,

I've heard so much about them, and anyway I'm good and hungry, so will you start making them—pretty soon?"

Brent said, very calm like, "I have no intention of touching yonder nest. I would not tamper with the handiwork of Scout Harris. I have but one thought now and that is to see him circumvent jelly cones as he circumvented wasps. But just for information I would like to inquire—perhaps you girls would be willing to step a little closer—I was wondering what that tin thing is that our hero used to plug up the hole."

"*Oh, it's the thing we make the cones with!*" cried Stella Wingate. "Look, Marjorie, *see what* he did! He put the cone maker into the wasps' nest! How in the world are we ever going to make jelly cones now?"

"Ask P. Harris," Hervey said; "a scout is resourceful."

CHAPTER XV

STUNG

I SAID, "Excuse me while I fall in a faint." I just fell on the ground and buried my face in my hands. The next thing I knew Warde was lying beside me suffering from shock. I said, "The fixer has fixed it."

Pee-wee just stood staring. "You make me tired," he shouted. "Do you mean to say I can't take that out——"

"Oh, absolutely, positively not," I said; "a scout's honor——"

"It's just a what d'you call it—a teckinality," he shouted. "If they have to have that thing——"

"Oh, we *don't*, we *don't!*" the girls began crying. "Don't touch it whatever you do! Remember your promise! Don't go near it!"

I jumped up and I said, "Girls, a scout's honor is to be trusted. The deed is did. The jelly cone maker stays in the wasps' nest. Who cares for

jelly cones? Our honor is the only thing that counts. You can depend on us, girls. We are boy scouts. The fixer has fixed it, and it will stay fixed."

"Is the little tin cone very necessary?" Brent asked them.

Marjorie said, "Oh, yes; you see we wrap the pie crust around it, that makes it into a cone shape, you know. Then we push it off carefully and stand it in a pan, a hot pan——"

"Mmm, yum, yum," I said.

"And leave it in the oven till it's nice and hard and crisp," Marjorie said. "Then we fill them with jam; they're perfectly delicious. Of course, we make a lot of them and stand them up in the pan and let them crisp all at once. They really ought to be left in till they're brown. Oh, I'm so sorry you can't try them. Isn't it exasperating? When you see them crisping in the pan they look like a lot of little tents—like an encampment. A friend of ours, Sophronia Simpe, invented them. We just come out here in the woods and *gorge* ourselves with them every Saturday."

Warde said, "Well, I guess this will be an off Saturday. We're sorry, but we made a promise

and, as Pee-wee very truthfully remarked, the wasps are good and mad by now and if we pulled that little tin wedge out——”

“Oh, we wouldn’t have you to do it for *worlds*,” Stella said. “Do you think we want to be overwhelmed with wasps?”

“Oh, positively not; say not so,” I said. “Not after our brave young hero sealed them up so nicely. They must be pretty mad by now.”

“Oh, I wouldn’t take any chances with them,” Brent said.

“Safety first,” Hervey said. “Let them rage; we’re safe.”

Then, all of a sudden, Pee-wee went up in the air. “Now I know you’re all crazy,” he said. “Do you mean to tell me that tin wedge or whatever you call that thing, can’t be pulled out very quietly——”

“And break a solemn vow?” Brent asked him. “How about a scout’s honor?”

“You make me tired!” he yelled. “It shows how much you know about physics, I mean ethics, I mean about how a thing can be all right if when you first said it, it wasn’t why you didn’t know how it was going to turn out.”

"It's as clear as shoe-blackening," I said. "Why didn't you explain all that before?"

"Because you're a lot of crazy lunatics!" he shouted. "I'm going to take that thing out——"

"Have a care, Scout Harris," I said. "Stand back; our honor is more important than a thousand jelly cones. You shall not pass."

All the while the girls were jumping around telling us not to let him and crying and starting to run away—you know how they are.

I don't know whether we would have had any jelly cones that afternoon if it hadn't been for Hervey Willetts. All the while he was lying there on his back not paying much attention to us. All of a sudden he grabbed some leaves that were on a low branch. I guess he didn't mean to break his promise. But anyway down came the wasps' nest kerplunk right on him and out flew the little tin wedge. Gee whiz, that fellow was quick. In about half a second he had his leather wristlet against the hole.

By that time the girls were hiding behind a tree about twenty feet away and screaming. Pee-wee was making a grand scramble for the cone form or whatever you call it, and the rest of us were

laughing. There was Hervey hugging the big nest and holding his leather wristlet tight against the opening. He tried to get up with the nest in his arms and it was awful funny to see him because he didn't have the use of one arm.

"What'll I do with it?" he asked us.

"We should worry what you do with it," I said. "Carry it around with you all afternoon, only for goodness' sake don't take your wrist away from the opening. I bet they're all just crowding inside the entrance to see which one of them can be the first out."

Hervey said, "I wouldn't mind so much being stung by one wasp, but I don't like the idea of hugging this thing for the rest of my life. My arm's beginning to ache, too. I can hear a buzzing inside."

I said, "Hang on to it, the plot grows thicker."

CHAPTER XVI

JELLY CONES

THE way we fixed it was to cut a piece of birch bark off a tree and slip it between Hervey's wristlet and the nest. Then we fastened it down tight and bound it all around every which way with fish-line.

One wasp got out, but he didn't do any harm. He seemed to be in a hurry, so we didn't bother him. Then we threw the nest out into the lake. We thought that by the time it got out into the middle of the lake the water would melt it, and the wasps would escape. Anyway, I should worry about them.

The girls didn't calm down till we told them that the nest had started on a voyage. Then we kindled up the fire for them and they started making jelly cones. There are lots of things you eat, but jelly cones are the kind of things you keep on eating. You just keep on making them and eating them. Oh, boy, they were good.

It was so nice sitting around under that tree that we stayed pretty near all afternoon. Those girls were starting a Camp-fire Girls troop. They said a girl in Brookside had started it. Her name was Sophronia Simpe. They told us a lot about her. They said she had lived on a ranch out west and had ridden wild broncos and everything. She could even throw a lasso. They said once she fell off a wild horse.

Warde said, "Are you sure it wasn't a clothes-horse?"

She said, "No, it wasn't a clothes-horse, Freshy."

I said, "Once our young hero fell off a merry-go-round horse; that's why he doesn't care to go around much any more. Ever since then he's been on the square. He thinks when he goes around he's doing a good turn."

Stella Wingate said to Pee-wee, "Don't you mind them, they're only making fun of you."

"I could handle them all," Pee-wee said, "if I wasn't busy eating."

So, then they began asking us about the scouts and about the kind of good turns we do and all that. It was nice sprawling around and eating

jelly cones and just talking. You can have a lot of fun doing nothing.

Marjorie Eaton said, "What kind of good turns do you do?"

I said, "Well, to give you an instance——"

"You got that out of a book," Pee-wee shouted. "*Just to give you an instance.* You don't know what it means."

I said, "As I was about to say when I was rudely interrupted, once I knew a poor family that were starving because they didn't have any coal——"

"You don't eat coal!" Pee-wee shouted.

Marjorie said, "Yes, what kind of a good turn did you do?"

I said, "I stuck out my tongue and made faces."

"That shows——" Pee-wee started.

I said, "I went over to the coal-yard where the men were unloading coal from the Drearie Railroad. I took a pail with me. It was enamel, all nice and white. That's why it was called pale—shut up everybody——"

"Did I say anything?" Pee-wee hollered.

"No, but you were going to," I said. "I took the pail over to the coal-yard and started calling names at the men and sticking out my tongue at

them and making faces. Then the men began throwing coal at me and pretty soon I had a painful. So, then, I took it to the poor family. And that shows how a few hard names and ugly faces can bring much happiness. But the trouble with Pee-wee is that he can never stick out his tongue because it's too busy."

Stella Wingate said, "Really?"

"Absolutely, positively," I said. "I can tell you lots of good turns that we did."

"Don't you believe a word he's telling you!" Pee-wee shouted.

"Don't believe *him*," I said. "He's so dumb he's named after a dumb-waiter. He thinks that a somersault is a good turn."

By that time everybody was laughing because they like to see Pee-wee and me in a mortal comeback—I mean combat.

"Wait till I finish this jelly cone and I'll tell you something," the kid shouted, all excited. "When I was trying to win the stromeny—wait a minute—badge——"

"He means the astronomy badge," Warde said.

"Sure," I said. "He's so dumb he thinks Warde is named after Ward's cake. When he was trying

for the astronomy badge he thought William S. Hart was a shooting star because he's always aiming a couple of pistols."

"*That shows——*" Pee-wee started.

"He's always thinking about shows," Warde said.

I said, "To show you how dumb he is, when he didn't win the first aid badge he said he was going to try for the second aid badge. When he was trying for the life saving medal he thought a daring feat couldn't be performed with his arms. He thought only colored scouts could try for the blacksmith badge. And to show you——"

"Hurry, before he finishes the jelly cone he's eating," Brent said. "I can feel the earth shaking under me."

"You've only got about five seconds," Hervey said to me.

Gee whiz, it was a race with Pee-wee's mouth. He was getting the jelly cone out of the way to start a converted attack, or a concerted attack, or whatever you call it.

"Give him another one—quick," I said. Marjorie handed him a couple of cones to keep him busy; she was laughing so hard she couldn't speak.

I said, "Just to show you how dumb he is, he thinks that a Star Scout is one who has won the astronomy badge. He thinks that the Raven Patrol that he's in is named after him, because he's always raving; I'll leave it to Brent."

Brent said, "Alas, it's true. All joking aside, an Eagle Scout came from Brooklyn last summer——"

"I don't blame him," Hervey said.

"That's neither here nor there," Brent said.

"*Where is it then?*" Pee-wee yelled.

Brent said, "The point is, our young hero thought that the youth in question won the Eagle award by reading the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*—and that isn't all."

"I never knew that," Warde said.

"It was common talk in camp," Brent said.

"But the worst is yet to come."

"You'd better hurry up," I said.

"There isn't another cone left," Stella sang out.

Brent said, "But all joking aside——"

"Which side?" Hervey asked him.

"To the left," I said.

"The left side, of course," Brent said. "All joking to the left——"

But that was as far as he got. Just then our young hero took the floor, I mean the ground. Already he had taken most of the jelly cones.

I said, "Stand aside, everybody."

"That shows you that they're all crazy!" Pee-wee screamed. "Not only they walk left-handed but they talk left-handed. They'd be tramping around the lake yet if it wasn't for a couple of girls. And Roy Blakeley he writes all this crazy stuff up and has his picture on the cover of a lot of books and you girls will be in the stories, too—you see. But over in camp everybody says his whole patrol ought to be named the laughing hyenas; they're so crazy that they jolly themselves when they haven't got anybody else to jolly and they think it's fun to tell a new tenderfoot to go out in the woods and see if he can hear the birch bark and invite a new troop up to their cabin and tell them there's going to be a racket up there and then show them a tennis racket and they told a little fellow that wanted to play tennis where he could find a racket and they told him to come where I was if he wanted a racket, because I made rackets, and even Mr. Allison says that sometimes they go too far——"

"That's why we just kept going round and round the lake this time," I said. "Sometimes we go entirely too near; you as much as admitted it yourself."

CHAPTER XVII

ANCIENT HISTORY

MARJORIE EATON said, "Can you be serious for five minutes?"

"How long?" Warde asked her.

She said, "Long enough to tell us something about the scouts."

"You want a serial story about them?" Brent asked her.

"We want a serious story about them," she said.

"That's different," I said. "Do you like pirate stories about them? Because there is buried treasure hidden in Black Lake. That's no joke, it's true—absolutely, positively. There's a tin box at the bottom of Black Lake containing about three hundred dollars. The people that started Temple Camp sank a lot of money in the enterprise. We have buried treasure and everything else at Temple Camp."

"You're fooling," Stella Wingate said.

I said, "A scout's honor is to be toasted; it's positively true. There's a diagram in Administration Shack telling where it is—or isn't, I don't know which."

Just then Brent Gaylong kind of touched me on the shoulder and I could see that he winked at Pee-wee and Warde. He kind of put his arm over my shoulder and led me away and said, "For goodness' sake, don't start that buried treasure stuff, Roy. You'll have Hervey diving in the middle of the lake for it. You know how he is."

"He must know about it," I said.

"I don't think he does," Brent said. "Anyway, you know Tom Slade and Uncle Jeb and the trustees want the fellows to forget about it. Whatever you do don't get Hervey started on that, whether he knows about it or not. You know he can't obey instructions, he just can't, he's built that way.

"The first thing you know he'll be drowning himself or getting himself dismissed from camp and we'll be to blame. It's like waving a red flag in front of him. Nix on the buried treasure stuff; there's plenty of fun without that. I'm sorry you mentioned the diagram."

"All right," I said, "let it go at that. I was just trying to get the girls interested."

He said, "Well, let's get them started on something else."

"Suits me," I said; "one subject is as good as another if not better. I'm sorry I put my foot in it."

"No harm done," he said, "only let's not follow it up. The buried treasure is buried; let's not follow it up."

"You mean follow it down," I said. "It's not troubling my innocent young life, I know that."

That's the way it is with Brent, he's always thinking about what's best for other fellows. And, gee whiz, he knows Hervey Willetts like a book. He was always a good friend to Hervey. Lots of times Hervey would have gotten into trouble with his recklessness if it hadn't been for Brent. Tom Slade and the trustees liked Hervey well enough and they admitted he was brave and reckless. But they were kind of sore at him because they couldn't manage him, and, gee whiz, you couldn't blame them. Hervey was kind of on the outs at camp except with just us few fellows and that's why he stuck with us.

Now I'll tell you about the buried treasure—that's what we always called it. It was a kind of a joke till little Skinny McCord nearly got drowned trying to fish it up. Then the trustees said we should all forget it. They put a notice on the bulletin board that there should be no more fishing for it.

That was two summers ago. It was before Hervey ever came to Temple Camp. It was only just kind of like ancient history when he got there. I had forgotten all about it because I have no use for ancient history anyway—that and civil government.

CHAPTER XVIII

A STORY OF THE PAST

Now this is the story about the buried treasure. After the big fire at Temple Camp three years ago (that's when I was a tenderfoot, but I wasn't so awful tender) a lot of carpenters were working putting up new buildings at camp.

They built the cooking shack (that's Pee-wee's favorite building) and the diving board (that's my favorite building) and the observation tower (that's Hervey's favorite building because he's always on the top of it taking chances and observations).

They built the new Administration Shack too. That's where the library and the mail office are and it's where the managers stay and it's where all the office business is. There are lots of pictures in there and portfolios with maps in them and everything. One thing I don't like about it, it's got a rug on the floor.

One day—it was on a Saturday—Mr. Carson

(he's a trustee) and another man who was a scout-master, went to Catskill to get the money out of the bank to pay the workmen. They always brought it in a tin box. So now you better look at the map.

Instead of coming around to camp by the trail they rowed across the lake. They started from a willow tree up near the outlet. That was where they had left the boat on the way down to Catskill. You'll see that tree. The reason why they didn't go around by the trail was because on account of the mud. It had been raining all the time for about a week and the trail was bad, especially in the woods. There were great big puddles in the woods like young lakes.

That afternoon when they came back it was very dark and while they were coming across the lake toward camp all of a sudden a thunder-storm started. Gee whiz, I can remember it because we were helping to pile up lumber at the new landing, and the wind blew over a pile of boards. We were just scooting for the pavilion when all of a sudden Worry Aiken (he was in a troop from Vermont), he shouted, "*Look at the boat! Look at the boat! Look at the boat!*"

Oh, boy, I'll never forget what we saw. The boat was about maybe two or three hundred feet from the shore where the willow tree is. It was so dark and the water was so all churned up like that we couldn't see very plain. But anyway it seemed to me the boat was upside down.

I know one thing, I had a funny kind of a feeling, gee, I can't tell you about it, but I felt as if maybe I would see something later that I didn't want to see. It felt all kind of, you know, sort of like when you're in an elevator and it stops suddenly.

The next thing I saw, a figure crawled up on the shore away over on the other side. A scout said, "*Look!*" That was when I first saw it. It looked black and low down like an animal. Then it seemed to stay still.

I said, kind of whispered, I was so scared, "I don't see the boat any more."

Garry Everson (he comes from down the Hudson), he said, "It's there, look where the light is—just this side of the light."

Then I could see it. It was upside down. You could hardly tell it from the water. There wasn't anybody near it that I could see. Besides, I

couldn't see the person on the shore any more. I felt as if pretty soon I would hear of something terrible.

Once in my class room a pupil had a kind of an attack on account of his heart, and they carried him out. And they said we should go on with our lessons, but anyway it seemed kind of funny and afterwards we found out he was dead. So kind of that's the same way I felt that afternoon.

In about half a minute all the camp was down at the lake and everybody was excited. Most all the kids were told to go in the pavilion. Tom Slade had a big oilcloth hat, rubber boots and a lantern. He looked kind of like a picture of a fisherman or a captain on a boat or something. It kind of gave me thrills to see him because, gee whiz, that fellow always knows what he's about.

I guess everybody knew what it meant. Mr. Whittaker (he's a trustee) called through the big megaphone, but there wasn't any answer from across the lake.

Then several men started around by the trail—Tom Slade and Mr. Whittaker and Uncle Jeb Rushmore, he's manager. Some scouts started after them, but they were chased back. We stood

on the porch of the commissary shack (you can see where that is) watching. Every now and then we could see the light from Tom Slade's lantern as they picked their way along the trail through the woods.

I guess it was about two hours before they came back. We just stood around waiting for them. When they came, Uncle Jeb and another man were carrying something on a canvas stretcher. That was Mr. Carson, and he was unconscious. Mr. Kennekott, the man who had gone with him, was drowned. He had got underneath the boat when it turned over and one of his legs had been caught underneath the seat. Even when Mr. Carson was better he didn't know how he'd got to shore.

After what happened the boat was blown out into the middle of the lake, and some of them went out in another boat and towed it to the landing. They found Mr. Kennekott caught underneath it. His leg was between the middle seat and the floor. That seat was very low. The tin box with the money must have gone down where the boat upset.

There wasn't much fun at Temple Camp after that. It was a kind of an off summer anyway on

account of the camp being sort of rebuilt. Mr. Kennekott's troop went away, and they have never come back to Temple Camp. Jiminies, you can't blame them. They were a nice troop, those fellows. One of them had the bronze medal—he sat next to me at eats.

The camp officials dragged the lake over on the other side, but they never found the box. Mr. Temple, who founded the camp, he said they shouldn't worry. So that was the end of it except after a while scouts began fishing for the box. Lots of them did that. They kidded themselves that they were treasure hunters, I guess. I never did because it always reminded me of what happened.

Of course, it was too deep to dive over there, and there was a strict rule against that. Because I'll tell you why. There used to be houses where Black Lake is and in some places old chimneys and things like that stood on the bottom. And there's a rule that we can only dive near the landing. After a while the trustees made a rule that we shouldn't even go over there and grapple for the box. That was after little Skinny McCord nearly got drowned. So that was the end of the whole thing.

Most of the scouts that were at camp that year don't come now and, gee whiz, you hardly hear anybody speak about it any more. It just happened to pop out of my head when we were talking with those girls.

Now there's one thing more I'll tell you. You remember how one of the scouts said the boat was near a light? When he was pointing it out to me? That was only the reflection of a light away up on the mountain.

There were two grown-up fellows who had a camp up in the mountain across the lake from Temple Camp. Often we saw their camp-fire at night. They had it burning that afternoon way, way up there. And it made a spot of light down on the lake. It was right close to that spot of light that the boat upset. That was what the fellow meant. It wasn't really a light, it was only a reflection. That summer those big fellows up in the mountain went away, and they never came back again. Gee whiz, you can't exactly say that the reflection of a light is a scout sign. Because when the light goes away the reflection goes away, too.

So, after a while nobody seemed to know just where the boat upset. The scouts who were there

that summer knew. But after that it was a kind of a—you know—a legend, sort of. I guess the trustees were glad of that because scouts couldn't go grappling any more.

It was all nice and forgotten, sort of, when all of a sudden last summer, Harry Donnelle came to see us at Temple Camp. He's a big fellow and he lives near me and he's especial friends with my sister, only she says I have to cross this part out, but I won't do it. That fellow was in the war, and he just didn't get killed as many as four times. He's been in South Africa, too. His middle name is adventure. Gee whiz, I hope he marries my sister.

Anyway he heard about that accident because birds come and whisper things to him, that's what he says. Believe me, I think they shout at him. Anyway he found out. So one dark, gloomy afternoon he took three of us up to that old camp, and he made a couple of other fellows row around in a boat down on the lake.

They built a big fire up at the old camp in the mountain and then the fellows in the boat noticed just where the reflection hit the water. Then they made a kind of a diagram on a map of the lake

that showed just exactly where the boat upset. First they tried to drive a pole in, but the lake was too deep. So then they made notes on the map and dotted lines and everything that showed that the spot was in a line exactly southeast of the willow tree, I don't know how far.

Gee whiz, there were going to be big doings next day—but that was the end of it. And I guess the trustees were glad of it. That very same night away went Harry Donnelle to Hudson Bay—he got a telegram, that's all I know. He forgot all about the buried treasure. Mr. Temple said that was just like him. All he wanted was the fun of the thing. I bet the trustees were glad when he went away. He sent me a post card from a trading station in Hudson Bay. It had a picture of trappers on it and everything and he didn't say anything about this fine diagram. When he came back he brought my father a bull moose's head.

I never saw that diagram, and I should worry about it, that's what I said. Because anyway the money didn't belong to me. I always heard it was in a big portfolio with a lot of other maps and things in Administration Shack. I guess they kept it as a kind of a curiosity.

Anyway nobody ever said anything about it. The buried treasure was dead and buried and we should worry about it because, believe me, there's plenty to do at Temple Camp these days without going fishing with grappling irons. I'd rather be jollying Pee-wee than doing that.

CHAPTER XIX

WE MEET A STRANGER

I JUST thought I'd tell you about it so you'll know. But I wasn't strolling around with Brent as long as it took to tell it. In a couple of minutes we were back.

He said, "Whatever you do don't start that stuff with Hervey around. First thing you know he'll be getting himself in trouble. He's just about due for a new mix-up with the management.

I said, "You're a nice one to be talking that way; you were with Harry Donnelle all the time he was up here."

He said, "Yes, but now I have to mind the baby."

"All right," I told him; "what you say goes."

From the looks of things it seemed as if none of the others had talked about it, not even Pee-wee. He's a wise little dumb-bell, I'll say that for him. So it was all right—for the time being.

After a little while we said good-bye to the girls and started off again on our left-handed hike. They went down to the shore with us and waited while we fixed the boat up and put another plug in the bottom. It was a wooden one. We don't mind poverty, but rags we can't stand—not in the flooring of boats.

Warde said, "We want to know where the lake is, inside the boat or outside. We want it to be one place or the other."

Stella Wingate said, "If you were sea scouts you'd know that some kind of a rag is necessary on every boat in case you want to fly a signal of distress."

"Sure," I said; "every time you wave your signal the boat sinks. You might as well take the rag without the boat when you're sailing; that's logic."

Brent said, "That's a very good suggestion."

The girls said they were sorry to see us go. I told them to look the other way, and they wouldn't see it. They said we seemed to have a lot of fun. Brent was awful funny. He shook hands with them very sober like and he said, "There was a sameness in our lives till we met you. Life was just one thing over and over again."

"And under," I said. "Don't forget our young hero."

"You girls changed the whole course of our lives," Warde said. "You have helped us to get somewhere in life. But we don't know where."

They said, "Well, you'd better be starting or you'll *never* get back to your camp. If you turn to the left at Brookside it will take you straight to Greenvale. There you'll find the first road to your left and if you take that it will take you into Fox Trail that goes to the left and that will bring you around this lake into the trail you've been trying to get away from. So you can keep your resolution and get back to your camp all right."

Brent said, "That's just what we want, to get back into the trail we want to get away from."

Marjorie Eaton said, "There's a carnival at Greenvale, too."

"Can we get sodas there?" Pee-wee wanted to know.

Marjorie laughed and said, "Yes, but I *think* the soda booth is on the right-hand side of the road."

"Foiled again," I said.

So then we started. We rowed along the shore

toward the outlet. When we came near to the outlet there was the willow tree I told you about. Right near it stood a young fellow close to the shore. He was looking at us and kind of waiting.

The thing I noticed most about him was his eyes, because I couldn't see them. That was on account of his hat. One good thing, he had a nose because that prevented his hat from falling down over his face. The front of his hat rested right on his nose. He was a kind of a grown-up fellow. His trousers were funny, they were tight at his knees, and then they changed their mind and got wider down near the ground. He had on low shoes—to match his brow, that's what Brent said.

Warde said, "Oh, look at the sharpy."

"Is that what you call a cookie nibbler?" Brent wanted to know.

I said, "Sure it is, it's a regular one. They're so stingy they wear their hats down in front to save their eyesight."

"I didn't know there were any of them running wild around here," Brent said. "Is it against the law to shoot them?"

Jiminy, that cake-eater looked awful funny. He was a rare specimen, kind of. His jacket was

long, and it had slanting pockets in it. I don't know why they have pockets at all, those fellows. They carry crumbs instead of dough, that's what I heard. He had a kind of a shoe-lace disguised as a necktie.

Brent said, "I wonder where he spends his time."

"It's about the only thing he does spend," I said. "I've seen that fellow before, I think he's staying in Brookside. He goes to the dances in Leeds and Catskills and Athens; I've seen him all over. He stands in front of Bartlett's store down in Catskill. He's a he-hopper. Those fellows let girls pay their own carfare."

Brent said, "They allow them on street cars then?"

"Let's row in and speak to him," Warde said; "they're tame, most of them; they're harmless except when you feed them cake."

"Sure," I said; "let's row in. He'll talk to us. Why shouldn't he? Talk is cheap."

CHAPTER XX

A RARE SPECIES

WE rowed close in shore near the outlet and the sharpy spoke to us first. We rested on our oars a minute to talk with him. He had a funny kind of a lisp in the way he talked. Not exactly a lisp, but sort of like it.

He said, "Are there any eels around here?" I suppose he wanted to be introduced to them.

Warde said, "I guess there are, but I don't know whether they dance or not."

He didn't seem to mind that. He just said, "I heard there were eels in here. It's deep farther out from shore, isn't it?"

I said, "Sure it is, it's what they call the perch-hole right out there. I guess there are eels, too, but we never bother with them."

He kind of waited a minute, then he said, "That's about where the accident was, isn't it? When the man got drowned?"

"Good night," I said to myself, "the cat is out of the bag."

Hervey said, "There have been four or five accidents." By that I knew he wasn't thinking especially about any particular one.

Brent said, "Yes, out there somewhere. There have been several drownings in the lake."

We were just going to start to row away when the fellow said, "They ever find the tin box?"

"Not as I know of," Brent said.

"A chap in Brookside was telling me about it," the sharpy said. "'Bout three hundred bucks, I hear. They ever take any steps to get it?"

"Can you beat that?" I whispered to Brent. "Right away he's thinking of new steps to take." I said out loud, "Why don't you go to the dance in Leeds to-night? They take lots of steps there."

He didn't get mad. He just said, "I should think you chaps would have found it."

I said, "We should fret our young lives about it. I guess the eels have spent it all by now."

He said, "You chaps must be a pretty slow crowd. I hear there's a map telling just where it is and everything. Why don't you try your luck

some time or other? It wouldn't cost you anything."

I whispered to Brent, "That's why it appeals to him. Those fellows are so cheap they won't live anywhere except in a free country."

Brent gave me a look to say I should keep still. Then he said, "Who's been telling you fairy tales?"

"What do you mean, fairy tales?" the strange fellow asked.

"Oh, about maps and all that," Brent said.

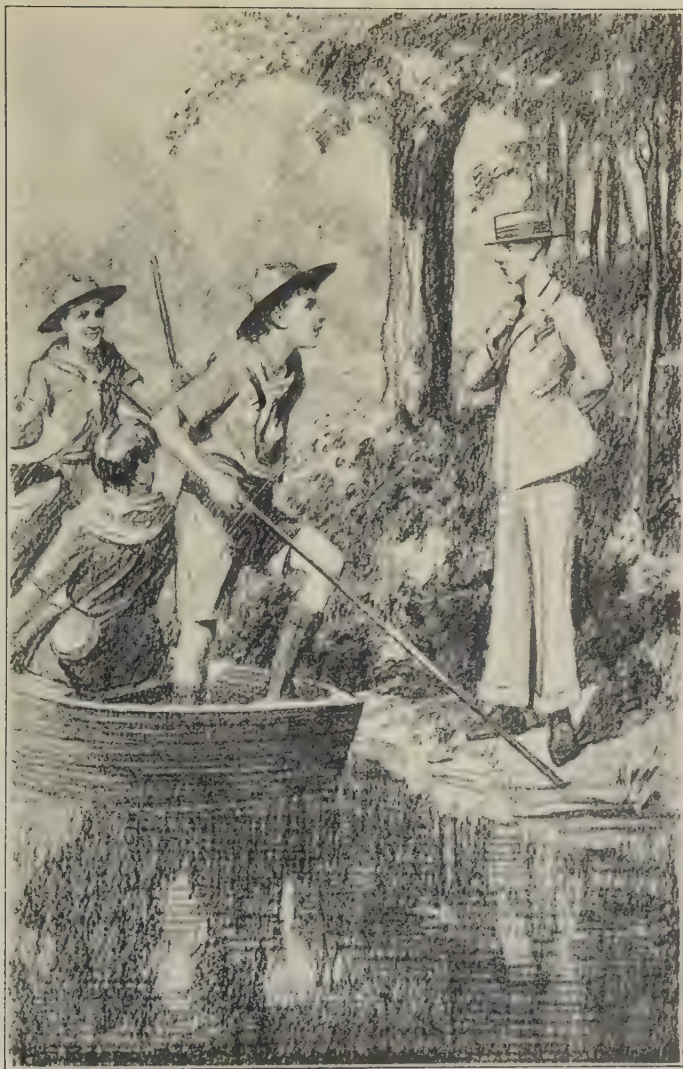
It seemed to me as if the fellow was sorry he had said that about maps. He just said, "Oh, I don't know, you hear a lot about Temple Camp all over. It's the big show around here."

"Even in Europe they heard of us," Pee-wee shouted. "It's been in the movies how we have pow-wows and war dances and things."

"Do you have them every week?" the sharpie asked us.

"You mean the dances?" Brent said. "Sure, drop over some time."

I said, "We have them every Friday and a week from Wednesday. We always wind up with an Indian dance named after the Indian motor-



"ANY JANES?" HE ASKED US.

Roy Blakeley's Tangled Trail.

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cycle. We always have a St. Vitus' dance to close the season."

He just looked at us, I guess he didn't know what to make of us. He looked kind of as if he was trying to make out if we really had dances over there. He said, "How do you get over there? Follow the trail around?"

"Sure," Warde said. "Either way it takes you right there."

He just stared at us vacant like and fixed his collar all nice with his left hand. "Any Janes?" he asked us.

"You said it," Warde told him.

"You got a dance floor?" he wanted to know.

I said, "No, we dance right on the grass. It's the latest craze; we're known as grass-hoppers. Didn't you ever hear of the rubber band? They furnish the music."

Gee whiz, he didn't seem to be mad at all. And he didn't laugh either. I guess he was really sorry thinking that maybe there were some dances that he missed. Maybe he was sorry that he could only go to one at a time.

CHAPTER XXI

THIRTY-FOUR CENTS

WE left him standing near the tree and started rowing through the outlet. The right name of the outlet is Dawson's Creek, but we always call it the outlet. By that time it was late in the afternoon, and Warde said if we were going to hike around the way the girls had said we ought to telephone to camp.

I said, "We can telephone when we get to Brookside."

"Well, let's not forget to do it," Brent said.

"What about that tin box at the bottom of the lake?" Hervey asked.

"I thought so," Brent said, kind of laughing. "Forget it. Nobody knows where it is. Maybe it isn't."

"The fellow said it had money in it," Hervey said. "It's not drawing any interest down there."

Brent said, "Well, it's not supposed to be at-

tracting any interest up here either, so forget it. There are nuts all over the country hunting for Captain Kidd's treasure."

"I'd like to dive for that," Hervey said.

"Oh, I suppose you would," Warde told him. "You know there's no diving allowed away from the springboard. I'll tell you where the tin box is if you want to know; it's in your head."

"It's in the sharp's head too," I said.

Brent said, "Well, there's plenty of room there for it. Let it stay there."

"He said something about a map," Hervey went on.

"It's going to be a nice moonlight night," Brent said.

"How do you suppose he knows about that?" Hervey asked.

"How do we know?" I said. "I suppose he heard some talk somewhere."

"Maybe he knows more than he said," piped up Pee-wee; "it's kind of mysterious. Maybe he's a confederate of somebody, maybe. Maybe he had a partner hiding. I bet he knows a lot."

"Sure," I said, "partners is his middle name."

"Knows a lot is good," said Brent laughing.

"I'd like to make a try for that," Hervey said.

"It would be some stunt."

"Are we going to take the first road to the left?" Brent asked. "Or are we going to call it off and go back to camp?"

"Answered in the affirmative," I shouted.

After that nothing more was said about the accident and the tin box. I guess we all saw that Brent wanted us to drop the subject.

Hervey was busy trying to swing up into the branches of trees as we passed through the outlet, so I guess he wasn't thinking much about that business either. It's nice and dim in the outlet because the trees reach all the way across it and in some places you can't even see the sky. Two or three times we had to backwater so as to take Hervey in again where he was hanging from some tree or other. Once he hung upside down by his feet. One place we saw a muskrat swimming across.

Now when you row through the outlet after a while you come to a road that branches away from the outlet to the left. That goes through

Brookside. So we drew the boat up there (that's where the girls told us to leave it) and started following that road. If it hadn't been for our trying to have some fun with Pee-wee when we got to Brookside, I guess maybe this story would be nothing but nonsense from beginning to end. But it turned out to be something else beside nonsense—you'll see.

In Brookside Warde said, "We'll 'phone to camp here and get it off our minds."

I said, "Sure, tell them not to expect us till they see us; maybe not even then."

"And I'll get a soda at the same time," Pee-wee said. "I'll treat one fellow to soda because I've only got a quarter and a nickel and four pennies."

I said, "After paying for two sodas you'll look like a sharpie."

"Do you mean to tell me I don't treat girls?" he shouted. "Lots of times I treat girls! Sharpies never treat girls, that's how you know them."

I said, "Oh, you're a reckless little spender. The slot machines will land you in the poorhouse some day."

"High-step Harris," Brent said.

"That's better than the one-step," I said.

Hervey said, "We can't 'phone here anyway, the 'phone is on the right-hand side of the road. There are only two stores, and one's a feed store——"

"What kind of feed?" Pee-wee shouted.

"Oats," Brent said. "Wild oats, the kind you sow, running wild with thirty-four cents in your pocket. I suppose you'll squander it on the first flapper you meet."

"I'll squander it right here in the drug store," the kid shouted. "And you needn't go around telling people I don't treat girls either."

"Oh, far be it from it," I said; "only last week a girl told me you were a treat."

We were just heading over to the drug store where the soda fountain and the 'phone booth were when Hervey said, "Keep to the left." So just for the fun of it, to keep Pee-wee from getting a soda we followed along after Hervey.

Brent said, "Honest, fellows, I think we ought to 'phone to camp."

"Duty is duty," Hervey said, awful funny; "keep to the left:

"When you go on a hike just you mind what I say,
The right way to go is the opposite way.

Don't bother with drug stores but follow this song,
If you turn to the right, then you're sure to go wrong."

Brent just kind of laughed and followed along after Hervey. I had to laugh, too, to hear him shouting about duty. I guess we all knew that we ought to 'phone to camp. And I guess we all knew Hervey didn't want us to 'phone to camp. I guess he thought they'd only tell us to come home if we 'phoned. He wasn't hunting for trouble, that fellow.

But anyway it was so funny to see Pee-wee following along after us with a terrible scowl on his face, and looking over at the drug store, that we just couldn't help hiking right along.

"A scout's honor," Hervey said.

Gee whiz, I had to laugh at him.

CHAPTER XXII

OUR FAVORITE OUTDOOR SPORT

"Absolutely, positively, I'm going to get a soda the next place we come to," Pee-wee shouted.

"I don't blame you," Warde said.

"The next place is Greenvale," Brent said, "and absolutely, positively, we're going to 'phone from there."

"They'll only tell us to come in, come in wherever we are," Hervey said.

"No, they won't either," Brent told him. "You'd like to get yourself and this whole party in wrong with the management. What's the good of doing that? All they want to know is where we are. I'll 'phone; you leave it to me, it'll be all right. Then we can take in the carnival at Greenvale. We can eat at the carnival."

"Hunting for trouble," Hervey said.

"You're the one that's always hunting for trouble," Warde told him.

"*I'm* hunting for eats, I know that," Pee-wee piped up.

"Is it possible?" I said.

"Suppose there are no eats at the carnival," the kid said, "what are we going to do? Then we can't get anything till morning, because there are no more towns after that and Chocolate Drop will be asleep when we get to camp."

I said, "Didn't you tell us once a scout never has to starve? That he can cook moss and make stew out of sassafras and birch bark and maple gum and cobble-stones and things. All we have to do is to squeeze the juice out of a couple of hunks of granite and stew up some willow twigs and sprinkle dirt over them like Daniel Boone used to do, *I don't think*, in Wilderness Lore page two hundred fifty-'leven for the information of maniacs that get lost in the woods of Maine."

"That shows how much you know about—about—nature—nature's resources!" the kid screamed.

All the while we were hiking along the road and all the fellows were laughing like they always do when Pee-wee and I are engaged in mortal come-back. He knows how to make nature

yield—you know, all that kind of stuff. He can't starve when he's crossing a vacant lot, he can make table d'hôte dinners out of roots like hunters lost in darkest Africa. If it gets chilly he can make Chile sauce out of the weather. *Some scout.* He's so hungry he swallows everything he reads. He can find his way in the back yard by noticing the angle of an angleworm.

I said, "If they don't have any pop-corn at the carnival, we should worry. We can just take some holes and tie them together and make a fish net and catch some fish in the forest."

"You think you're very smart," he shouted. "You think the Catskills are a trackless wilderness. Those things are for when you're in trackless wildernesses. I suppose you don't know what unfathomable depths are," he hollered at me.

"I wouldn't know one if I met it in the street," I said. "But I never said that a large school of fish is a college."

"*Did I say that?*" he fairly yelled.

"Sure, you told Mary Temple," I said. "You told her a blazed trail is one that's on fire."

"*You're crazy!*" he screamed.

"Don't you suppose I know that?" I said.

"*You know you're crazy!*" he screeched triumphantly.

"Absolutely," I said. "That shows you're wrong as usual when you say I don't know anything."

"Knowing you're crazy isn't knowing anything," he screamed. "Do you call that logic?"

"Let up," Brent started laughing. "Here's a sign—SCHOOL GO SLOW."

"A school?" I said. "Believe me, I'll not only go slow, I'll stop altogether. I'll even go the other way."

"Keep to the left," Hervey said.

I guess by this time you're beginning to see how crazy we are. No wonder the squirrels eat out of our hands. They think we're nuts. I guess we ought to be called the Cuckoo Patrol.

CHAPTER XXIII

HUNTING FOR TROUBLE

BUT anyway this story isn't all nonsense, and you'll see it isn't. And you'll see that a tangled trail can be something else than just a crazy left-handed hike, too.

On the road to Greenvale we passed a summer boarding-house named Shady Villa. There was a big sign across the private roadway to it. Hervey reached up with a muddy stick (that fellow always carries a stick) and marked an N after Villa. "Shady Villan," he said.

"Rub that out," Brent said. "If you don't know how to spell villain I wouldn't advertise it to the whole world. That's the trouble with you, you're always having bad spells."

We sat on the railing there and watched some people playing tennis. Gee whiz, it made me wish for a game. It was just kind of before twilight, and the sun was a great big red ball.

For a little while I sort of wished we were on our way to camp instead of on our way away from it. It seemed funny not to be going home at that time. Suppers are dandy at Temple Camp. I don't know, I felt a little funny because it seemed as if we had no right to keep going like that as long as the day was over. I kind of wished we had 'phoned at Brookside. I could see Brent was a little worried too. He said, "Come on, let's beat it for Greenvale and find a 'phone."

The only one that didn't care was Hervey. Because he never cares. He just thinks about what's happening and not about what's going to happen. No one can change him, that's what Uncle Jeb says. A lot of times he has been in trouble on account of that. Even then he was on probation, but he should worry, because he was having plenty of fun. "One place is as good as another, if not better," that's what he says.

Once he stayed all night at a gypsy camp, and once he rode up to Albany with a peddler. Outside of us his best friend was Sandwich, because Sandwich didn't have any rules. He'd leave any of us to follow Hervey.

So we started off again, and it was about half past six when we got to Greenvale.

Hervey said, "Foiled again, the 'phone is on the right, it's in the station."

"I'm going to get a chocolate sundae," Pee-wee called out.

"You can't," Warde told him. "There are no Sunday trains. Stung again. This is a good place to eat supper, we can just sit down around the time-table."

"No stops," Hervey said, hiking right along. "Carnival next stop."

"Just a minute," Brent said; "we're going to 'phone from that station."

"And be ordered home," Hervey said. "Nix on that."

"We're going to 'phone," Brent said, "so that settles it."

"It settles *us*, all right," Hervey said. He didn't seem mad or disgruntled, he seemed just happy-go-lucky, the way he always is. Anyway I couldn't see that he was sore about it. The kid was sore because he couldn't get a soda, but Hervey wasn't. When I thought about it afterward

—after what happened—I remembered that he wasn't mad. I guess I never saw him really mad anyway. He just said, "We're making the mistake of our lives, Gaylong. Safety first."

"That's just what I say," Brent laughed.

"If it's got to be did, I'll did it," said Hervey. And he just kept on marching right around and over toward the station.

Warde said, "You ought to be the one to talk, Brent."

"What's the difference?" Brent said. "Then he called, "Hey, Hervey, do you know what number to ask for?"

"I'll ask her what number she's got," he called back. "I'll pick out a nice one."

"Tell them we're going to the carnival in Greenvale if it's all right," Brent called to him. "Tell them we'll be home at about eleven."

"Better make it twelve, hey?" Hervey called. "I'll make it one, that's easier to remember."

"Eleven, I said," Brent called. "Ask for Leeds two-seven."

"All right, old Doctor Gaylong," Hervey called back.

"That's just like him," Warde said. "He doesn't even know the camp's 'phone number."

We all sat on the fence across the road from the station and waited.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE FLAPPER AND THE FLOPPER

IN a minute or so Hervey came sailing out of the station with a funny kind of a hop, skip and jump that he has. He's always doing that. He reached up and gave the telephone sign a good swing as he passed it. He had queer kind of bright eyes, Hervey had; all the scouts said so. I don't know what it was about them. They were gray color and awful bright. I noticed them as he came over toward us that night. He was laughing and he said, "All right-o."

"What'd they say?" Brent asked him.

"All right-o," Hervey said again.

"Who'd you talk with?" Brent asked him.

"Who'd I talk with?"

"Yere."

"Oh, I talked with a fellow, a scout," Hervey said, sort of careless like.

For a couple of seconds it seemed to me that

Brent would go over to the station himself. But I guess he didn't want to hurt Hervey's feelings. He just said, "What was his name?"

Hervey said in that happy-go-lucky way he has, "His name? Let's see, his name was Wilkins. He said he'd tell the keepers." Hervey always called the officials of Temple Camp keepers. The more he knew we didn't like it the more he did it.

Brent said kind of serious like. "You talked to a scout by the name of Wilkins and told him we were going to the carnival and would get back about eleven?"

"Precisely, exactly."

"And he said he'd tell the management?"

"Precisely, exactly."

"Just what did he say?"

"He said 'All right.' I bet I can kick that telephone sign down if I take a good running jump."

"All right, let's beat it for the carnival," Brent said. "Let's leave the sign where it is."

"Just as you say, Doc," Hervey said.

All the way to the carnival, Brent was kind of quiet. But Hervey, he should worry. He was

doing a new kind of scout pace, it was awful funny. The thing that stopped Brent from being kind of sober and worried happened at the carnival. After that everything seemed all right again. It was all on account of Pee-wee.

The carnival was on the left-hand side of the road but I guess we would have gone to it anyway because we were hungry. Any port in a storm, that's what Brent said. We had some frankfurters and, yum, they went good. Brent treated to them.

There were lots of city people at that carnival, because Greenvale is a kind of a young city. It has a high school up on the hill. I suppose that's why they call it high. It has movie shows and everything.

In the field where the carnival was, was an old sign that said EARTH FOR SALE. That shows how important Greenvale is. They thought they owned the earth. The field was all dolled up and there were a lot of booths and a merry-go-round and ten cent shows and everything. There were lots of people there wandering around.

At the edge of the field, near where the road was, were two or three houses. There were men

selling things on the back porches of those houses. There was a sign on one of them and it said HOT WAFFLES AND HONEY, 15 CENTS. There were three or four tables on the porch and a kind of a counter inside. There was a fat man who I guess owned the place. He had a big white apron on. There was an Italian boy who was waiting on people too. All along the railing of the porch and even inside of the room were more signs. They said DE-LICIOUS. THEY MELT IN YOUR MOUTH. REAL SOUTHERN WAFFLES. THE KIND THAT MAMMY USED TO MAKE. HERE THEY ARE, AS SWEET AS SUGAR, AS SOFT AS SNOWFLAKES.

Pee-wee said, "I'm going to get some of those."

I guess we would all have bought some because, yum, yum, they smelled good, but all of a sudden, Pee-wee started ahead of us, pell-mell, for the building. "I'm going to get two helpings," he shouted; "I've got thirty-four cents." Just then, kerplunk, down he went sprawling on the ground.

"Going down," Warde said.

"Did you know you fell?" I called to him, just as he was scrambling up again. "Do you need any first aid or would you prefer orangeade?"

"It's a rope from that tent," he shouted. "I tripped over it."

Before we could reach him a girl went running up to him calling, "*Oh, did you hurt yourself?*" She began brushing him off and asking him if he hit his head and kept on brushing him off all the time, straightening his scarf and everything like that. "Oh, you tore your stocking," she said. "Isn't that a perfect shame!" She was a regular little finalehopper, that girl. She had on one of those hats, whatever you call it, and everything. She had on sandals, she had bobbed hair too.

When we reached the scene, Pee-wee was just standing there letting her brush him off.

Warde said, "That's the way with him, he falls for everything. He fell for waffles and then he fell for a rope."

I said, "Look at the hole in your stocking. Where's the part where the hole is? Look around on the ground."

"Don't you mind them, they're crazy," Pee-wee said.

Brent said to the rest of us, "You shouldn't laugh at a fellow because he's down."

"Most always he's up in the air," I said.

"Don't you mind them," the girl said.

"Do you think I'd mind them?" Pee-wee shouted. "They think they're having adventures, but they're crazy."

"I wouldn't lower myself as you do," Warde said.

"He thinks that's a joke," the kid said. "They start on a trip——"

"Don't talk about trips," I said. "Yours was the best one I ever saw."

"Did you hurt yourself, kid?" Brent asked him.

I said, "Your stocking looks like a corkscrew."

"Don't pay any attention to them," the girl said.

Pee-wee said, "I wouldn't bother my head about them; come on and I'll treat you to waffles."

"Are we in on this?" I asked him.

"No, you're not," he said. "Come on and I'll treat you to waffles," he said to the girl. "They make me tired."

"Why do you eat them, then?" I said.

"I think it's awfully nice of you," the girl said.

I said, "Oh, that's nothing, he's a rising young scout. Didn't you just see him rise? If you want

to see him at his best go and have some waffles with him."

"Will they mind?" she said to Pee-wee.

"What do you care if they mind or not?" Pee-wee said. "Will you come?"

She said, "If—I don't know—if you think they won't mind—if you really want me to."

"Absolutely, positively," I said. "Take him away from us a little while. The pleasure is ours."

CHAPTER XXV

RESOURCES AND THINGS

"WHAT—do — you — know — about — that?" Warde said.

"We're too slow for *him*," said Hervey. "Let's climb up on the roof while we're waiting."

"Let's not," Brent said.

"Isn't he the gallant little scout?" Warde said, laughing all the while.

"What do you suppose came over him?" said Brent.

"I guess he wants to show that he's not a sharpy, that's all I can make of it," I said. "He didn't lose much time. He'll have four cents when he comes out."

We all laughed, it seemed so funny. Then we all tiptoed up onto the porch and looked in through a window that was open. I could hardly keep a straight face to see him in there sitting at a table opposite that flapper. His feet were up

on a cross-piece under the chair and he was studying the menu card with a terrible scowl on his face. One stocking was all screwed around from his grand flop.

The girl wasn't any bigger than he was. Brent said she was a flapper in the chrysalis stage. He gave one look and turned away with his hand over his mouth.

Hervey said, "Shall I plug him with a pop-corn ball?"

"You keep the pop-corn in your pocket," Brent whispered.

"Don't spoil the show," I said.

By that time the Italian boy was standing by the table waiting. Pee-wee looked as if *he* should worry about the Italian boy. I think there wasn't anything on that card but maybe about two things, but Pee-wee kept studying it. Pretty soon the waiter went away and came back with two waffles on two plates and a little jar of honey. Then they started eating.

"What do you think of it?" Warde asked.

"It's a scene that none but an artist could paint," Brent said.

"Keep still, don't laugh," Warde said to me.

Pretty soon we could hear Pee-wee telling the girl about the scouts. He told her they have to be shivellers.

"Do you suppose she knows he means chivalry?" Warde asked us.

"Hsh, keep still," Brent whispered. "Listen." He caught Hervey by the arm; I guess he was afraid Hervey was going to throw something.

"They have to be thrifty," we could hear Pee-wee saying; "so that's why they always have money. They don't need it because they can depend on nature, but they have it because they're thrifty. In the forest you need a lot of lore and things like that. A sharpy, he'd starve in the forest, but I wouldn't."

"Can you picture him starving," I whispered to Brent.

"Cake-eaters, they never have any money," Pee-wee said.

"They never treat," the girl said.

"Sometimes they even make girls treat," Pee-wee said. "Do you call that being a shiveller?"

The girl said, "I should say not. I know a boy and when he took me to have refreshments, he dropped a penny in a slot and got a piece of

chocolate and broke it in half. He called that refreshments."

"A scout can make a light in the dark even if he hasn't got any matches," Pee-wee said. "Do you know what phosphates are?"

"You mean orange phosphates and lemon phosphates?" the girl asked him.

"N-o-o-o," Pee-wee said, very lofty like. "It's something you can make light with in the pitch dark. If you're going to be a scout you have to have a lot of resources. Nature, you have to be able to kind of boss it."

The girl looked as if she didn't see how any one could do that. She said, "If you're bossy I don't like you."

"I don't mean I'd boss you," Pee-wee said. "I'd only boss nature. The woods—you know—and the stars and things like that."

"Mr. Silly, you couldn't boss the stars," the girl said.

"That shows how much you know about the stars being guides," he said. "Maybe on another planet there are scouts. Maybe there are Boy Scouts of Mars. And maybe to-night they're taking a hike on Mars and maybe they're following

this earth, maybe it's guiding them. See? Right while we're sitting here eating waffles maybe some scouts are following this earth.

"Maybe this earth doesn't look bright to us while we're sitting here eating waffles, but just the same that's the color of it when you get billions and billions of miles away. Maybe it's in their handbooks, how do we know? Right now this minute while I'm sitting on it taking this mouthful, maybe it's leading them out of the woods to safety. See?"

"I think you're just too silly," she said.

Gee whiz, when I thought of Pee-wee sitting on the earth eating a waffle and a lot of scouts on Mars following him around I couldn't keep a straight face. I whispered to Brent, "If they're anything like him up there they'd be following the waffle, not the earth."

"Shh, keep still," Brent said.

"Shiveller guided to safety by a waffle," Warde whispered.

Just then the fat man who ran the place came sailing out through the door with a great big trayful of waffles. I guess he was going around the

grounds selling them. "Out from under," he said to us. He was a nice kind of a man.

Now the way I remember it, it was right away after that Warde said, "The earth seems to be having an eclipse."

"What do you know?" I whispered. Because inside the light seemed to be getting dim all of a sudden. "I hope he has some phosphates in his pocket," I said. It was awful funny, the light seemed to be just getting dimmer and dimmer.

"Pity the poor scouts on Mars," I said.

CHAPTER XXVI

FLOP NUMBER TWO

WARDE said, "The plot seems to be getting thicker. What's the matter?"

"The lights are slowly and peacefully going out," I whispered. "I don't know where they're going."

"They ought not to be allowed out after nine o'clock," Hervey said.

"I don't know what kind of parents they can have," Brent whispered.

"Will they come back, I wonder?" Hervey said.

"Not if they're anything like you," I said. "They'll probably stay out all night."

"Oh, the lights are going out," we could hear the girl say. "Where's Mr. Sorronto?" I guess she lived around there; anyway she seemed to know the man.

"He—he's gone out too," Pee-wee said. "You mean the fat man?"

She said, "The meter needs a quarter in it. We have one like that in my house."

"I'll put a quarter in," Pee-wee said, "and he can give it to me when he gets back. Where's the meter?"

"Some little hero?" Brent whispered.

All the while the light was getting dimmer and dimmer, and the kid kept fumbling around in his pocket. "I got a quarter," he said.

He could just about see the passageway that led down to the cellar, it was so dim by that time, but he started for it very proud and swagger-like. We could hear him tramping down the stairs as if he were going to kill a couple of dragons like the "shivellers" of old.

"He thinks he's a knight of the square table or something or other," Warde said. "Sir Writing-pad or whatever his name was."

Pretty soon, zip, up went the lights again and we knew our young hero had tracked the quarter meter to its lair. He came swaggering back again and sat down at the table.

"He can even make lights out of quarters," I said.

In about five minutes the two of them got up

and the waiter gave Pee-wee a check. I guess that was what reminded him that he only had nine cents in his pocket. All of a sudden he looked funny—kind of blank.

"I'll give you five cents," he said to the boy, "and you can get the quarter from the boss when he comes back. I put a quarter in the meter."

"You payer de mun," the boy said, very suspicious.

"I paid it already to the meter," Pee-wee said.

"You payer de mun now; no go meet 'er," the boy said.

Pee-wee kept fumbling in his pockets; he looked awful funny. Then he sat down again and the girl sat down too and they just sat there looking at each other.

"I have to wait till the man comes back so he can give me the quarter I dropped in the meter," Pee-wee said. "Anyway, we're not in a hurry, are we? Because anyway, he'll be back very soon. And anyway I ought to wait and tell him what I did, hey? That's only right. If I paid that boy now and went away the man might wonder who was tampering with his property and going into his cellar and everything. Scouts, they have

to be careful about those things—I have to tell him what I did—See? You see how it is?”

“I think it’s poky sitting here,” the girl said

“We can hear the music here all right,” Pee-wee said. “You can always hear music better at a distance—you ask anybody.”

The waiter boy walked away, all the while keeping his eye on Pee-wee. He didn’t seem to understand but anyway he wasn’t going to let those two get away. I had to laugh to see how he went over and sat behind the counter and kept his eye on them.

“Gee whiz, one thing,” Pee-wee said; “I’m good and sore from falling down; my leg is stiff; maybe I ought to rest anyway, hey?”

The girl said, “They’re dancing over in the pavilion. Why can’t we go over there? It’s so poky sitting here. I want to have a dance. I know all the boys over there.”

“Do you mean to tell me you’d dance right after eating waffles?” the kid said. “Gee, that shows you don’t know what’s good for you. A scout isn’t supposed to hike right away after eating—gee whiz, you ask anybody.”

“I don’t want to ask anybody,” the girl said.

"Mr. Sorronto is selling things over at the pavilion and he won't come back till the dancing is all over. He's got a whole big pile of things on his tray. He won't come back till the intermission. I'm just *longing* to have a dance," she said. "I don't see why you don't come back later and tell Mr. Sorronto. He'll be only too glad to give you back your twenty-five cents."

"There might be a lot of reasons," Pee-wee said. "Maybe the place might be closed when I come back. Now I see I had—maybe I didn't have any right to do that. Do you mean to say I ought to sneak off?"

All the while the waiter kept his eye on them, and the girl was kind of sulky. She wasn't mad, but just a little sulky. She wanted to go away, I could see that. She just pouted and said, "It's poky sitting here after we're all finished."

Pee-wee said, "You'll feel more like dancing if you have a good rest."

"They're playing a fox-trot," the girl said.

"I know all about foxes," Pee-wee said. "Do you want me to tell you about them?"

Oh, boy, I nearly died laughing. Brent had to put his hand over my mouth, and Warde had

to put his hand over Hervey's mouth. There sat the kid with a terrible, heroic scowl on his face, and his feet kind of locked in the legs of the chair, and only nine cents in his pocket, and the girl looking at him and waiting, and the Italian keeping his eye on him, and the dancing going on over at the pavilion, and Mr. Sorronto lost in the shuffle. I don't know where he was, he just forgot to come back, I guess. Poor kid, but just the same I couldn't help laughing. It wouldn't have bothered a sharpie much. He'd have made her pay the quarter, *he* should worry. I know sharpies, all right.

All of a sudden, Hervey Willetts broke loose. He went sailing into the room with that funny hop, skip and jump he has, and went winding in and out among the tables, and just as he was passing Pee-wee he grabbed him by the hand and began shaking it and saying, "H'lo, Scout Harris, I haven't seen you in quite a while." All the while he kept on going and went winding in and out among the tables and out through the door again. But I noticed Pee-wee had something in his hand under the table and I knew it was money.

"All right, if you don't want to wait, I'll pay

him now," Pee-wee said. "Gee whiz, it doesn't make any difference to me." Then I could see from the change he got that Hervey must have passed him a five dollar bill. That was the day he got his allowance from home; he got it every two weeks. I know he must have got it that very day or he wouldn't have had it all still in his pocket. That was Hervey all over, reckless and careless.

Gee, I thought about that a lot later, especially after what happened pretty soon. Because while the four of us were standing outside laughing, he was the one to break loose and go to Pee-wee's rescue. And he did it in a way so the girl would never know. I heard her say to Pee-wee, "That boy's just a silly."

But, jiminies, I can see him now the way he went in and out among those tables. He can't do things like other people, he just *can't*. Afterwards he told us that was called the Tangled Trail. Gee whiz, little we thought that pretty soon he'd be on a real tangled trail. Little we thought when we were all the time saying, "the plot grows thicker," how pretty soon it would really grow thicker—for Hervey anyway. . . .

CHAPTER XXVII

THE BLACK SHEEP

WE all went over and watched the dancing a little while and then we started home. Pee-wee's vamp (that's what we called her) disappeared forever in the wild and woolly dancing pavilion. Pee-wee never saw her more—that's what Brent said.

"I wonder how the sharpy happened to miss the carnival," Warde said. "He'll die of shock when he hears there was dancing there."

"Come on," Brent said, "we've got to hustle."

"It's early yet," Hervey said.

"Yes, it'll be early in the morning pretty soon," Brent said.

Hervey just started singing:

"Early to bed and early to rise,
And you'll never meet any regular guys."

He should worry.

We followed the Greenvale road to where Fox Trail branches out from it to the left. But anyway I guess the left-handed hike was off for that night. We dropped it, and if you pick it up you can have it—we don't want it.

It was pretty dark and spooky along Fox Trail; it runs through the woods. It isn't a regular road at all. That took us into the trail around the lake again; you'll see where if you look at the map. And that trail took us into Cabin Lane right near the Main Pavilion. And there we were back at camp again. If it hadn't been for Sandwich we might have been hiking around the lake yet and we might have starved just going round in a circle and that's why I have so much respect for sandwiches, because they remind me of the little dog that saved our lives, especially tongue sandwiches.

There was only one light in camp and that was in Administration Shack. I thought it was funny because mostly there isn't any light at all late at night. The lake looked awful black and the reflection of the light in Administration Shack showed away off on the water. It seemed like two lights. We went hiking up the porch of Ad-

ministration Shack as bold as could be, with Hervey singing that crazy song:

"When you go on a hike just you mind what I say,
The right way to go is the opposite way.

If you come to a cross-road don't make a mistake,
Choose a road, and the *other's* the one you should take.

Don't bother with sign boards but follow this song,
If you start on the right road you're sure to go *wrong*.

You can go on your feet, you can go on a bike,
But the right way is wrong when you start on a hike."

Around he marched to the door singing a lot
of other crazy stuff he knew that goes like this:

For up to twelve o'clock it's late,

Yes, up to twelve o'clock it's late;

It's very late,

It's very late;

Observed his father, surly.

So I'll stay out till after one,

Oh, I'll stay out till after one,

Replied his very wise young son;

For after one it's early.

In we went, pell-mell, and there was Mr. Arnoldson (he's a resident trustee) sitting at the

table reading a magazine. He just laid it down and looked at us and said very sober, "Well, what's the big idea?"

I could see something was wrong; I knew he had been sitting up waiting for us.

"We've been to the carnival in Greenvale," Brent said. "Some crazy day we've had."

Mr. Arnoldson just said, "Hmph. Your idea, Willetts?"

"Why pick on me," Hervey said.

"I guess we were all equally crazy," Brent laughed.

Mr. Arnoldson said, "Well, I suppose you're all equally reprehensible then. You scouts know the rules of this camp, don't you? You know you're supposed to be here at supper and afterward unless you have special permission to be away. Who gave you permission?"

Brent just said, kind of surprised, "Why, I thought it would be all right if we 'phoned. You said so yourself once."

"You needn't tell me what I said," Mr. Arnoldson shot back at him. "Do you want me to understand that you 'phoned to camp?"

Brent was sort of a little mad. He said, "I

don't care what you understand, Mr. Arnoldson, and I think it's all right to remind you that you said if scouts were going to stay out they must 'phone. We did 'phone. And we thought that would be all right."

"At what time did you 'phone?" he asked us.

"At about half-past six," Brent said.

"From where?"

"From the railroad station at Greenvale."

That seemed to be a poser to him; he just drummed on the table and looked at all of us.

"Which one of you 'phoned?" he asked.

"Hervey 'phoned," Brent said.

"Eh huh, I thought so," Mr. Arnoldson said, with a kind of a funny smile. "Who did you talk to, Willetts?"

"A scout named Wilkins," Hervey said.

"Ask him his name?"

"How do you suppose I found out?" Hervey said. "I didn't want to 'phone, I'll tell you that much. I didn't care so much."

"Don't, Hervey," Brent said in a low tone.

"I should bother," Hervey said.

"Bother about whether you tell the truth or not? That what you mean?" Mr. Arnoldson

asked him. Then he said, "Any of you fellows see him 'phone?"

"No, we waited outside," Brent said.

"Ah, yes," Mr. Arnoldson said with a kind of a smile. "Well now," he said, and he clapped his hand down on the table, "there was no 'phone message received at this camp from any of you boys this evening."

"You sure of that?" Brent asked.

"*Absolutely*," Mr. Arnoldson said. "And there is no scout or anybody else at this camp by the name of Wilkins. I'm sorry for you four boys, Harris and Blakeley and Hollister and Gaylong, you were duped. It's all right, go to bed and forget it. Willetts, you're a liar and we don't want any liars at this camp. You not only try to fool the management and disobey rules, but you fool your comrades. You thought we'd call you in if you 'phoned. And you knew these boys wouldn't stay out without 'phoning. So you put one over on them; you lied to them. I was going to give you all a good calling down and then turn in because I'm sleepy. A good calling down wouldn't have killed you."

"Gee whiz, it wouldn't kill me," Pee-wee said.

"Now you four turn in and forget it," Mr. Arnoldson said. "And you, Willetts, had better go up where your troop bunks, if you know where that is, and pack up your stuff and get out of here in the morning. And don't ever show your face in Temple Camp again. Don't talk back, and cut out the bravado; there's the door, get out of my sight."

Hervey just stood there gulping. I was glad he wasn't able to speak because he would only have started swearing. He doesn't care much what he says, sometimes. Anyway before he got a chance I kind of got hold of him and led him out through the door onto the porch. The others came out, too, but none of them spoke to him except Pee-wee. He said, "Good night, Hervey, and anyway I like you." Hervey didn't say anything, didn't even answer him. Brent and Warde started down Cabin Lane, but neither of them spoke to him. Brent made out not to see him at all.

Gee, I hated to leave him that way. I waited and said, "Hervey, don't you care, maybe a camp like this isn't the best place for you. I know most of the things you do you don't stop to think. You

wanted us to keep going and I'm not holding it against you. I know you're reckless and you don't think. Don't you care because you'd never get along here anyway. I know the good side of you."

"Do you think I'm a liar?" he asked me.

"No, I don't," I said. "Just that once——"

"Do you think I lied just that once?" he said. "Why should I lie? I'm not afraid of Arnoldson and that bunch. I've stayed away a dozen times, haven't I? I never lied about it."

I had to smile a little because it seemed as if he was even proud of it. I said, "No, I know you don't care about the management. If you did—sort of fool Brent—it was for our sakes—so we could keep on having fun."

"Well, I either lied or I didn't," Hervey said.

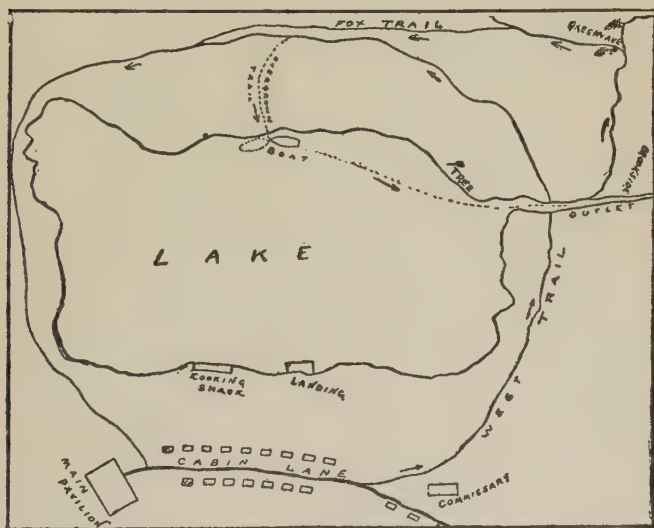
"I know that," I said, "but I'm thinking of a lot of things the others don't think of——"

"*So am I,*" said Hervey.

"Never you mind," I said.

Just then the light inside went out and I started away, because I guess I didn't want Mr. Arnoldson to come out and see me talking with Hervey. I'm ashamed to admit it, but that's the way I felt.

As I walked along Cabin Lane to where our troops bunk I noticed that the reflection out on the water was still there even after the light in Administration Shack was out. But I was too sleepy and I was feeling too bad to think about that.



I made this map and it isn't much good and it doesn't show all the buildings and things at Temple Camp. But anyway it shows how Cabin Lane is and how West Trail turns out of it to the left and goes around the lake and comes into it again near Main Pavilion. So you can see how it is we kept going round and round the lake all the time till something happened. Follow the arrows if you don't want to get anywhere. Only if you keep following them you'll never get through the story.

Lucky for you Sandwich was with us, because if it wasn't for him there wouldn't be any story, so that shows how a mutt can be a good author.

ROY BLAKELEY.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THROUGH THE MIST

IN my patrol cabin all the fellows were asleep—they're a sleepy bunch except when they're awake. Even Warde seemed to be asleep, but that's nothing because I've known scouts in my patrol to fall asleep on their way to our cabin and to undress in their sleep. They go to sleep beforehand so they won't have to bother doing it when they get to bed. That way they save time. Pee-wee is a Raven, and so he didn't sleep in our cabin.

I started getting ready to turn in, but I didn't get very far. I don't know, I felt sort of like you do just before exams in school. Kind of, I don't know, shaky. Just because Hervey didn't say anything to Mr. Arnoldson, that made me think that maybe he would do something crazy. If he had answered back more I guess I would have felt different.



I SAW SOMEONE SITTING AT THE END OF THE SPRING-
BOARD.

Koy Blakeley's Tangled Trail.

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As long as I knew I couldn't sleep I put my jacket on again because I hate to be lying down when I can't sleep, just the same as I don't like to be walking around when I'm sleepy. I was wondering what the scouts in my patrol had been thinking about Warde and me. Because now that I knew no 'phone message had been received they must have thought it was funny for us to stay away. I'm patrol leader and I'm supposed to be a shining example. I guess I'm not so very shiny, but Warde is a good example; he's a whole arithmetic.

So I put my jacket on again and went outside. It was pretty dark. Most always I'm dead to the world at that time of night, and it seemed spooky to be out when the whole camp was sleeping. *Christopher*, but it was still. There was a kind of a mist and it seemed to change everything; it got me all mixed up. I couldn't tell where the shore of the lake was; it made the land and the lake sort of the same.

Until then I never knew that there were a lot of things in camp that make a noise, I mean the boats knocking against the landing and the weather-vane creaking, and things like that. Because

you don't hear them in the daytime, or any time when there are other sounds. But believe me, they gave me the creeps that night. Where I stood I could hardly see the cabins, the mist was getting so thick. I couldn't see the tents at all. I just about knew where the lake began.

All of a sudden I saw something terrible. I saw a thing walking. It was the same color as the mist, I could only just see it. I couldn't see that it had any legs, it just kind of moved, it was the same all the way down to the ground. I couldn't stir I was so frightened.

I just stood where I was and, gee, I admit that my heart was thumping. I heard the chains on the boats clanking and that made me shiver. Lots of times I'd heard them before, but they sounded spooky that night.

The thing kept going and got to the lake and kept right on walking over the lake—walked right out over the lake. A little way out it kind of faded away in the mist. Then I didn't see it any more. I just stood there, I couldn't move. . . .

CHAPTER XXIX

EYES TO SEE AND EARS TO HEAR

THEN all of a sudden I made up my mind I wouldn't be scared. I walked right toward where I had seen the thing, because I wanted to prove to myself that I hadn't seen anything at all.

Then, in a minute, I had to laugh to myself. I came to the end of the narrow board-walk that is built out to deep water where the diving board is. Out at the end of the springboard I could hear a voice, very low. I walked right out along the boards, making a lot of noise so as to prove that there wasn't anything spooky at all.

Away out at the end of the springboard I saw some one sitting with his feet dangling over. When I got away out to the end I saw it was Hervey. Sitting right close beside him was Sandwich. Hervey had his bathrobe on but it was thrown off from his shoulders and I could see he only had his trousers on. He was kind of shivering.

I said, "You gave me a good scare, Herve. I saw you come out here, but I couldn't see the platform under you, the mist is so thick. I thought you were a ghost or something. What are you doing out here anyway?"

"Oh, just sitting here," he said. "You'd better go to bed; you know the rule."

I said, "How about you?"

"I'm not a part of this outfit any more," he said. "I'm through—almost through."

I said, "You're just as much of a scout as I am to-night. It's a wonder you couldn't keep one rule before you go away. What are you going to do? Go in swimming? And besides when you tell me I'd better go to bed that's as much as saying I'm not as good as a dog. Do you say that—that I'm not as good as a dog?"

"Sandwich didn't call me a liar," he said.

"Did I call you a liar?" I shot back at him.

"You're a scout," he said, "and they're all the same. They're as much the same as a lot of clothes-pins."

I said, "I know you're different, Hervey. But I didn't call you a liar and none of us fellows did. I admit they think you lied and——"

"You think so too, don't you?" he said.

"I don't know what I think," I said. "But I know I like you, and I'm going to stay right here as long as you do. A scout has to—no matter what, a scout has to——"

He just laughed kind of sneering like. He said, "You call yourself a scout. G-o-o-d night! You're a peachy bunch, you fellows. You ought to all be slapped on the wrists—Arnoldson and the whole crowd."

I said, "Yes, and how aren't we scouts?"

"You're all the time shouting about deduction, and observation and all that bunk," he said. "I don't *claim* to be a scout. But if I did I wouldn't wear a pair of blinders. I wouldn't hear a friend called a liar, I wouldn't. Hey, Sandwich?"

"What did we do?" I asked him.

"Well, one thing," he said, "did you notice the 'phone in Administration Shack to-night? Did you notice the receiver was hung upside down? Did you notice how somebody must have been rattled and hung it up in a hurry? Did you notice the map portfolio lying open? Did you stop to think that it was while everybody was at supper that I 'phoned? And one thing more I'll tell

you too; the voice that answered me lisped. Now you better run to bed. Hey, Sandwich?"

"What do you mean—lisped?" I asked him. "What of it?"

"Don't make me laugh," he said. "You don't even remember that the sharpie we met on the other side of the lake to-day, lisped. You don't remember how he was asking about the trail here? He was the fellow that gave me the name of Wilkins, because he was all rattled when the 'phone rang. Stick around a little if you'd like to see him dance. He's going to do a dance to-night that he never did before. And it isn't going to cost him a cent. Is it Sandwich?"

CHAPTER XXX

THE THREE OF US

I SAID, "I don't understand. What do you mean? What are you going to do? I didn't call you a liar, Herve. You admit I didn't, and I'm blamed glad I didn't. You did 'phone then—did you? Just say you did—just say it so I can say I believe you. Tell me more—I—I believe every blamed word that you say. I admit I'm a punk scout—now are you satisfied?"

He said, sort of more pleasant, "You're not so bad, it's Arnoldson and that crowd—the keepers."

I said, "Go on and tell me."

"Didn't you notice a light away across the lake when you came out of Administration Shack?" he asked me.

I said, "I thought it was the reflection of the light."

"Somebody is out there," he said. "You can't

see the light now on account of the mist. But somebody is out there. I can see a little glimmer now and then."

"I can't see anything now," I said.

"That's because nobody called you a liar," he told me. "It means more to me than it does to you."

I just gulped, I could hardly speak. I put my hand on his bare arm, it was all tattooed by some old sailor that he met once, and I said, "You're—you're not going to get away with that, Hervey—not with me. It means just as much to me—it does—as—as it does to you. It's just like as if he called me a liar. That's the way I feel now. I can't see any light out there, but whatever you're going to do I'm with you. If that crazy fool came to camp and sneaked into Administration Shack hunting for the chart he had heard about, he's a bigger fool than I thought he was. Do you suppose his name is Wilkins?" I asked Hervey.

"No, he just gave that name," Hervey said. "If he'd had any sense he'd have stood the receiver off when the 'phone rang. I suppose he

got rattled. It's just a crazy fool enterprise all through. He's out there now, fishing around, I suppose."

"I'm glad you admit it's a fool enterprise," I said. "Brent was afraid you'd want to go fishing for it yourself."

"All I'm interested in is fixing Arnoldson," Hervey said. "I'll make him look like two cents before I go. Come on, Sandwich, if you're going."

I said, "What are you going to do, Herve?"

"I'm going to swim over there," he said. "If it's that dancing monkey out there, he's coming back here to admit he answered the 'phone. I don't care anything about his sneaking into Administration Shack or anything else, that's his business. But he's coming back here to say he answered that 'phone call. Or else he's going to the bottom of the lake. That's me."

He started sliding off the board, but I held him back. I said, "Hervey, you're crazy, you're not going to swim over there."

"The boats are locked," he said.

"Well," I said, "I've got the key for them." Gee, I never felt more sorry for Hervey than I

did then. Because all the scouts at camp had keys for the boats. They were only kept locked at night on account of strange fellows coming there and using them for eel bobbing. It seemed that Hervey was the only fellow that didn't have a key.

I said, "Hervey, I can't swim that far, even if you and Sandwich can. But I'm going with you, so you'll have to use a boat; remember you've got a punk scout with you, Herve. You have to make allowance for me. Will you wait just a minute?"

I groped my way back to my patrol cabin and got a padlock key out of my duffel bag. Hervey was still waiting, swinging his legs from the board. Sandwich was right close beside him.

"Come on," I said, "we'll row over. If he's there we'll find him and if he's the one why then he'll sit out the next dance and have a free ride back to camp; that ought to appeal to him."

"You're breaking the rule to use a boat after nine o'clock," Hervey said.

"You're doing well," I laughed. "Where did *you* ever learn the rule? I always thought that

you wouldn't even know a foot rule unless you were introduced to it."

"I don't want to get you in Dutch," he said.

I said, "I'm not thinking about rules at all. I'm thinking about you. Come ahead."

CHAPTER XXXI

THE VOICE IN THE NIGHT

MAYBE I wouldn't have thought the same as Hervey did about it, only for his telling me that the person who answered the 'phone lisped. I hadn't noticed anything in Administration Shack at all, I have to admit that. But if some one answered the 'phone some one must have been there. And if there were signs that some one had been there, we ought to have noticed them.

When I thought about it as we rowed out on the lake, gee whiz, I could see plain enough that that young freak we had met would be just likely to hike around to camp and walk into Administration Shack if no one was there. Anyway all the camp was at supper when we were waiting for Hervey to 'phone, I knew that much.

Probably he didn't find anything in the map-case to help him, but that wouldn't stop him from grappling around in the lake late at night. Mr. Ellsworth says that people who hunt for treasure

are always fools. A lot of fools had hunted for that tin box before the sharp, I know that. And a lot of fellows had talked about it all around the neighborhood. Look at Harry Donnelle; he was starting to hunt for it.

Anyway, one thing, I knew that the only way Hervey could square himself was for him to get hold of the fellow who answered his call. You needn't think I was going out on a treasure hunt, because I wasn't. But Hervey only had that one chance, and I was going to help him.

We rowed around the edge of the lake close enough in so that we could make out the shore, because that night we couldn't have seen where we were going if we hadn't. Sandwich sat on the little three-cornered seat in the bow; he looked funny sitting there. The mist was so thick the handles of the oars were wet and it was all beady with little bits of drops of water all over inside the boat.

I said, "What are you going to do, Herve? Suppose it's him, what are you going to do?"

"I'm going to make him admit what he did, I'm going to make him admit it to Arnoldson," Hervey said. "That's all I care about."

"And then you'll stay—at camp?"

"*What? Me?*" he said. "Not so you'd notice it. I'm through with this crowd—a lot of medal chasers."

I was rowing and he was sitting sideways up on the stern seat with his knees drawn up and his hands clasped around them. The little hat without any brim that he always wore looked funny. It always looked funny but, I don't know, that night it looked especially funny. It was all cut full of holes. Somehow it kind of seemed to me that nobody understood him. Maybe Sandwich did. Anyway I hoped that things would work out like he thought they would.

I said, "Herve, if the fellow that answered you lisped, why didn't you say so right then? Didn't it make you suspicious?"

He said, "I never thought about it till we got back, and I saw how things looked in the office—and Arnoldson called me a liar. Then I remembered. I remembered that the fellow we met lisped and that the voice over the 'phone lisped. I'll nail him all right," he said. "You leave it to me. He's got more resourcefulness, or what-

ever you call it, than most of you chaps have, I'll say that much for him."

"Thanks for the compliment," I said. It seemed funny to me that he wasn't mad at the fellow for what he did, only at Mr. Arnoldson. He seemed to think the fellow had done a pretty good stunt. If anybody can understand Hervey —*g-o-o-d night!*

He just sat there, perched up on the stern seat, very calm and quiet. I couldn't make out if he really wanted to square himself or just have an adventure. I rowed around past the outlet and then he beckoned for me to stop. I rested on my oars, and we both listened. It was very still. Once a fish jumped, and that startled me. I could hear an owl way far off.

We drifted out from shore a little till we couldn't see the shore at all. It seemed as if we were in the middle of the ocean; we couldn't see anything only just a little water around us. It was so strange it had me nervous. There wasn't any light anywhere that we could see.

"Listen," Hervey whispered.

"I don't hear anything," I said under my breath.

"Shh," he said.

"Do you mean that little clanking sound?" I asked him.

For just a minute or so he looked down into the water. I couldn't see anything there except that the water was rippling a little. I didn't think that was anything worth noticing.

"What's the matter?" I whispered.

He didn't say anything, just reached and took one of the oars from me.

"What's the matter?" I whispered.

Still he didn't say anything but felt around a little in the water with the oar.

I whispered, "I don't think it's worth while fooling around after the money if that's what you're after. That's not going to square you at camp."

"Got a fish-line?" he whispered.

I just couldn't help saying, "Yes, I have; scouts carry fish-lines, that's one good thing about them."

There was a hook on my line. He tied an oar-lock to the cord for a sinker and let it down into the water. Pretty soon he began pulling it up again and all of a sudden, there right outside the boat was a long, thick, gray thing. Right away I

saw it was a fishing seine that he had lifted up. He reached over and grabbed it and then, somewhere near us I heard a terrible scream, and then a splash. I couldn't see anything, only the thick mist all around. . . .

CHAPTER XXXII

HERVEY ALL OVER

I WAS so excited that I let one of the oars go sliding into the water.

"Where are you?" Hervey called. "Can't you hang onto the boat?"

"It's sinking," a voice called.

"It won't sink," Hervey shouted. "It'll swamp. Hang onto the stern of it. Where are you anyway?"

While he was calling he was feeling for the oars and I had to tell him that one slid into the water. I wouldn't tell you what he said, but anyway he was excited. We could hear screaming and splashing and cries of "*Help, help!*"

"Hang onto the boat," Hervey cried. Then he said to me, "Keep calling so I'll know where you are. Don't try to move, you don't know which way you're going. Just let her stand as long as we can't row. She won't go far, only

keep calling. All right, I'm with you," he shouted. Then, before I could say anything he had jumped into the water and was swimming off. The mist just swallowed him up and in a few seconds I couldn't see him at all, only hear the sound as he swam and that voice somewhere.

"Here I am," I kept calling. And sometimes I gave the Silver Fox call (that's the call of my patrol) so he would know where I was. But somewhere another voice kept giving the same calls and I knew it was an echo and maybe he wouldn't know what way to go when he started back. Every time I called the echo called too, from somewhere far off.

Pretty soon I could hear voices and I heard Hervey say, "Let go your arm, leave it to me."

"I'm here," I called. "Here—here—here—here I am. That other voice is an echo—here I am—right here—right here——"

Pretty soon I could see him coming out of the mist. It seemed just as if it broke open to let him through. He was holding some one up and I could see a head sort of hanging back and looking up at the sky.

"All right?" I asked.

"Sure thing," Hervey said. "Get hold of him, will you?"

"At the stern," I said. I was glad to show him I knew that much anyway, never to lift a person over the side of a small boat.

It was some job getting the rescued fellow aboard, and then I saw it was our friend, the sharpy. His coat with the slanting pockets looked awful funny all wet and clinging to him. He was all right, that was one good thing, but his sharpy suit—*good night!* The worst that had happened to him was a good scare.

"He was doing a new dance when I grabbed him," Hervey said.

The fellow just lay in the bottom of the boat breathing hard, but I could see he was all right. He reached up with his left hand and fixed his funny little necktie, and then I knew he was all right. I guess he would do that in his sleep.

"He's going to sit out the next dance," Hervey said.

"What happened?" I asked him.

Then he told me just how it was. The fellow was dragging the lake with a seine. He had fastened one end of it on shore and was rowing

with the other end. When Hervey lifted the seine and grabbed it the fellow happened to be standing in his boat and it pulled him over into the water. He grabbed the boat along the side and, of course, that swamped it.

I'll say one thing, if the old tin box is ever found that will be the way to find it—dragging with a seine. And that cake-eater would have stood a pretty good chance of finding it too if he had been free to work in the daytime. But he was trying to do it all alone in the night, that was the trouble. Anyway it gave him a good scare and took all the nerve out of him.

Hervey said to him, "Well, you had a wild night. If you had only told me what you were going to do when we were talking over the 'phone I'd have joined in with you. And we'd have found it. It serves you right for staying away from dances. You have to come back with us to tell one of the keepers that I'm not a liar and then I'll hike as far as Catskill with you if you're going that way."

"I'm staying at Brookside," the sharpie said.

"Well, come over to Temple Camp anyway and see the fun," Hervey said. "It'll do you good."

I saw that Hervey was just in one of those happy-go-lucky, reckless moods, and that now after all he didn't care so much about anything—unless there was an adventure in it.

So I said, "Mr Wilkins, or whatever your name is, only I guess that isn't your name, when you had your first scare to-night, that was when you heard the 'phone ring over at camp, you got this fellow in Dutch. You got him called a liar because he said he 'phoned to camp and they never heard of any message. We know all about what you did to-night and nobody's going to make any trouble for you, because anyway, one thing, you've had trouble enough. There's a man, he's trustee——"

"All you have to do is tell him he's a liar," Hervey said. "Then I'll hike as far as Brookside with you."

"You don't have to tell him any such thing," I said

"You stick to me and you'll be O. K.," Hervey told him. "Didn't I just save your life?"

The poor sharpie didn't know what to make of it all. He was grateful to Hervey, that's sure. I guess he saw it wasn't any use denying anything. I guess he wasn't scared any more, because Hervey

seemed to be making friends with him, sort of. I had to laugh because after all Hervey's fine plan to bring this fellow back like a prisoner, there he was sort of pals with him. Christopher, but he's a sketch.

The fellow said, "They'll make a lot of trouble for me over there."

"They make it for me too," Hervey said; "don't you care."

"The place was open; I just walked in," the sharpy said. "There was a sign that said VISITORS WELCOME. You fellows invited me to drop over."

"You sure dropped over," I began laughing. "The water is unusually wet to-night. You didn't take anything over there. They'll give you a good calling down, that's all."

"I get one of those every day," Hervey said.

"You mean every minute," I told him.

Then I said, "All you have to do is come over with us, and anyway you can't help it, because I'm sculling the boat around now, and then all you have to do is admit just what you did so as to prove this friend of mine didn't lie. You can do that much, can't you? He saved your life. You

can put him right with the crowd over there, can't you? That's all you have to do. It's just a question of whether you've got a yellow streak or not."

"And we'll have a lot of fun doing it too," said Hervey.

CHAPTER XXXIII

HERVEY'S SERENADE

HONEST, I'd rather run the whole Silver Fox Patrol than try to run Hervey Willetts. But as we sculled around I could see that even that other fellow was kind of getting to like him.

Hervey sat perched up on the little three-cornered seat in the bow with his legs dangling out into the water on either side and Sandwich lying on the bottom near him. He looked, I don't know,—I just had to laugh when I looked at him.

I said, "Herve, after all this you're not going to spoil everything, are you? We had a good time to-day and we're going to have a whole lot more. You've got a medal coming to you for what you did to-night. You were called a liar and now a couple of hours after that you can have the whole camp eating out of your hand, Mr. Arnoldson and all. This fellow, you've captured him too, and he'll go the limit to help you. Won't you?" I said.

"Nobody can say I have a streak of yellow and get away with it," the fellow said.

"For goodness' sake don't mix things up now when everything's coming your way," I said to Hervey. "They'll wrap Temple Camp up for you and send it home prepaid. Will you let *me* see Mr. Arnoldson and tell him?"

He said, "Blakeley, I'm through with this outfit for good. I beat it to-night."

"While everybody's shouting for you?" I asked him.

"Precisely, exactly," he said. "I might have joined a circus this summer——"

"Good night!" I laughed.

"Instead of hanging around here and being insulted," he said.

"You should worry about being insulted," I told him. "If you care as little about being insulted as you care about most things, especially risking your life, it won't take you long to forget it. Besides when you threw an old tomato at the bulletin board so you wouldn't be able to read one of the rules on it, wasn't that insulting the camp? If you'd only forget insults as easy as you forget rules, gee, I'd be satisfied," I told him.

He just said, "Insults I can never forget, Blakeley." All the while he was trying to balance the boat hook on his nose.

"You make me tired," I told him.

When we got to the landing he said, "Come on if you want to see the grand finale; come on, Wilkins."

The sharpy kind of hung back. He said, "My name is Tripler."

"I knew it would be something about tripping," Hervey said.

"Believe me, you're the one that's going to trip," I told him.

He just said, "Come on, finalehopper, if you want to see the grand finale. Absolutely nothing can happen to you. Come ahead, Blakeley, if you want to see me wind up in a blaze of glory."

I knew he was going to do some crazy fool thing, how could I stop him? I could see that Tripler, or whatever his name was, was kind of nervous, but Hervey had him following like a little dog. That's Hervey. He went sauntering up through Cabin Lane, swinging his stick and shouting:

"Early to bed and early to rise,
And you'll never meet any regular guys."

I could hear sounds of scouts moving in the cabins, but a lot he cared. By the time he got to Official Bungalow there were about a dozen sleepy looking scouts with us, with their clothes all end-ways and their hair all rumpled—they were a wide awake looking lot, I think not.

"What's he up to now?" one of them gaped.

Gee williger, Hervey looked like a what-do-you-call-it, one of those knights of old standing in front of a castle.

"Search me," I said to one of the fellows. "He reminds me of Sir Building Lot, or whatever they call him, in the tales of King Arthur."

"*Mr. Arnoldson!*" Hervey shouted. "Oh, you Mr. Arnoldson, come out here and apologize to me before I start home! Wake up, you old boob!"

"Cut it out," I said to Hervey; "you mind what I tell you now."

He just kept shouting, "Come on out if you're not ashamed to face me! Come on out till I put it all over you! Oh, you Arnoldson; come on out and take back what you called me! Come on

out if you want me to accept your apology! Come on out if you want me to apologize your acceptance! Don't be afraid of the dark! Come ahead out! Oh, you-u-u-u, Mr. Arnoldson, come on out; it's nice and foggy!"

I said, "Will you keep still, Hervey."

All of a sudden somebody wearing a bath robe came out on the porch. Then a couple of heads appeared at windows.

"All the fish in Official Bungalow wake up," Hervey shouted. "Is that you, Mr. Arnoldson?"

"Careful what you say now," I whispered to Hervey.

CHAPTER XXXIV

TOM FIXES IT

Now this is next to the last chapter in this book, but you should worry because I'm going to write a lot more books.

Mr. Arnoldson said very stern, "Well, sir, what are you doing here at this hour of the night? What is all this?"

Hervey said, "These fellows came of their own accord except this one and he's the one who was in Administration Shack at six o'clock to-night and answered the 'phone when I called and gave me the name of Wilkins.

"He was there hunting in the case for a chart of the lake, and he's here to tell you I'm not a liar. He wanted to hunt for the treasure so you see there are others as crazy as I am, but I wouldn't go to the trouble of telling a lie and I don't intend to stay here anyway, only I want you to know that I'm not a liar. He answered the 'phone and said he'd tell the keepers. He did it because he got rattled, and he's just as good as I am——"

"Good night," I whispered to a fellow near me.

"And he didn't commit any crime because it says on the shack *visitors welcome*," Hervey went on. "So now if you want to ask him any questions you can do it, and if you care to apologize for calling me a liar you can do it, only hurry up because I'm through with this place—I'm washing my hands of it."

"He knows one scout law—cleanliness," a fellow whispered.

Mr. Arnoldson was awful nice, I'll say that. He came down and said, "Willetts, I'm always ready to apologize when I'm wrong. Who is this young man?"

"Willetts ought to apologize for waking everybody up," a scoutmaster said.

"Not at all," Mr. Arnoldson said; "I couldn't sleep with the stigma of lying upon me."

"He never sleeps anyway," somebody said about Hervey.

Cracky, I have no use for sharpies, but I have to admit that this one was all right. And he could use dandy words too. He told Mr. Arnoldson just how it was, the whole thing. Hervey just

stood there trying to balance that crazy stick on his nose—he didn't look very much insulted.

Mr. Arnoldson said, "Well, scouts, I'm glad you arose so you can all hear my apology."

"Stop balancing that stick and listen, will you!" I whispered to Hervey. Honest, he had me nervous.

Mr. Arnoldson said, "Willetts, I never denied you were brave and venturesome—too venturesome." That's just the way he said it. "I never concealed the fact that you are unruly and disobedient and reckless. You would rather do a stunt and be spectacular than be a good scout. Your doubtful reputation caused me to misjudge you. You can't be any happier than I am at this public apology.

"I apologize to you, Willetts, and whatever else you are, you are not a liar. I advise you to go to your quarters and turn in now and get some sleep. I'm glad you aroused me. In the morning you are going to make a fresh start, Willetts, and show what kind of a scout you can be."

It was mighty nice, the way Mr. Arnoldson said it. Gee whiz, he couldn't have been nicer. He wasn't mad at all on account of the things Hervey

had shouted. He just kind of admitted that Hervey was in the right the way he came and everything. And all the scouts were saying that was some stunt how he had saved Tripler's life. *Jiminetty*, Hervey had everything going his way. That was just when he got me good and mad with his crazy, reckless ways. Why didn't he shake hands with Mr. Arnoldson? Oh, no, he must start off without even saying a word to him. I felt awful sorry for Mr. Arnoldson. He didn't even get mad at Hervey calling him a boob.

Hervey just said very grand like, "I just wanted this whole kindergarten to know that I'm no liar. Come ahead, Trip, let's get out of here, I'm through with this outfit. They're dead, and they haven't got sense enough to lie down. I'm through with this camp for good and all. I was going to leave last week."

"I understood you to say you would accept my apology, Willetts," Mr. Arnoldson said to him, awful nice and patient, sort of.

Hervey said, "I do, but I'm through with this place. I was told to go and I'm going—that's absolutely positive. I've had enough. I don't belong here, I——"

Plunk! Just as he was starting off who should he bunk right into but Tom Slade.

"H'lo, Hervey," said Tom. "What's the matter now? Breaking up housekeeping?"

"Slady, I always liked you," Hervey said; "but this bunch—I'm leaving to-night, Slady. So long."

I guess Tom must have been there all the time. He just said, "Too bad, Hervey, I was just going to ask you to do a little favor for me—a good turn."

"Nix on those," Hervey said. "Come on, Trip."

"You see," Tom said in that easy way he has, "there's a carnival going on at Greenvale——"

"We were there," Hervey said; "come ahead, Trip."

Tom said, "Well, you see, they had a fellow engaged to do a high dive there on Saturday, and he's flunked. They sent here and asked if we happened to have a good diver who could do the stunt—dive from a high platform or something like that—carrying a flag—I forgot just what. I told them *nothing doing*——"

"What do you mean, nothing doing?" Hervey blurted out.

"I told them there wasn't a scout here could do it," Tom said.

"What do you mean, couldn't do it?" Hervey shot back at him. "I saw that platform, it's a cinch——"

"Yes, for a professional," Tom said.

"What do you mean a professional?" Hervey came right back at him. "There's a pond there and a ladder—we saw the whole business—it's—Slady it's—there's nothing to it—it's a kid's trick."

"Well, er—as long as you're starting away to-night," Tom said. "If you were staying over Saturday——"

"I'll stay over Saturday, Slady," said Hervey. "I'll do that just to show you I can. Nobody can call me a— But not a day after Saturday, Slady. You tell 'em I'll do that dive and throw in a double somersault—I'll show you. You told them there's nobody here could do that? *You told them that?* You make me laugh, Slady!"

"You think you could do it?" Tom asked him, kind of doubtful and serious.

"Slady, don't make me laugh," Hervey said.

"It would be some stunt," said Tom.

"What do you mean, stunt?" Hervey shot back. "Slady, I'll show you—you just leave it to me."

"You'll try it then?"

"*Try it!* Don't make me smile, Slady. You tell 'em I'll do it. Here's my hand on it."

"I don't want your hand," said Tom; "give it to Mr. Arnoldson. If you really mean business, if you really think you could do it, if you really want to give your hand on it, as a pledge——"

"Posilutely," Hervey said.

"Well, then, give your hand to Mr. Arnoldson," Tom said; "he's a trustee. Go ahead, if you mean business and are not just bluffing give your hand to Mr. Arnoldson. Are you game? Talk is cheap. Now see if you're game."

Gee whiz, I had to laugh to see Hervey walk up as bold and friendly as could be and shake hands with Mr. Arnoldson. Honest, that fellow's a scream. Mr. Arnoldson was laughing all over. Before they got through shaking hands who should go running up but Sandwich, jumping up at Mr. Arnoldson and at Hervey and barking like mad.

I guess he wanted to give his hand on it too.

CHAPTER XXXV

TO THE POINT

THE next morning after breakfast Hervey said to me—he just came sauntering up kind of, and he said to me, “Did you ever notice when you look away up a railroad track how the two rails come together away far off?”

“Is it a hike?” I asked him.

“No, but didn’t you ever notice?” he said. “You stand between the two tracks and look *away* off as far as you can see and the two rails get nearer and nearer together till they make a point?”

“I see the point,” I told him.

“That’s where I often wanted to take a hike to,” he said. “There must be a lot of railroad accidents at that place. Wouldn’t you like to hike there and look around?”

“Oh, absolutely,” I told him; “I’m just as crazy as you are. If we get to the place we ought to name it some point or other.”

Hervey said, "That's what I was thinking of. Don't you suppose all the places that have names ending with *point* happened to get their names that way? West Point and Greenpoint——"

"Sure, and pencil point and pen-point and all those places," I told him.

"Shall we get Pee-wee?" he said.

"*Good night!*" I shouted. "If we spring that on Pee-wee he'll drop dead; he'll drop so dead that he'll even be dead and buried."

"It's a good kind of a hike," said Hervey, "because it takes you a long way."

"Oh, positively," I told him; "it takes you even farther than that. How did you ever think of it?"

He said, "Well, after the big fuss last night I went to bed."

"You expect me to believe that?" I asked him.

"And I thought of it while I was lying in bed," he said. "If we could follow the West Shore tracks till we get to the point where they come together we would probably find a lot of wrecks and skeletons and things piled up, and maybe a lot of gold. Let's start along the West Shore tracks this afternoon and make a solemn vow that we won't turn back till we reach the point."

"That ought to be quite a stroll," I said.
"We'll stop in Albany for supper, hey?"

Hervey said, "I had an inspiration."

"You'd better look out," I told him; "Pee-wee has all those copyrighted."

"This is what I mean," he said. "Last night while I was lying in bed, I was wondering what kind of a hike we could take that the management wouldn't object to. See? They're going to be very particular now. So I thought if we went and told one of the trustees that we're going to take a little—you know, just a little stroll——"

"A ramble," I said.

"Just to the place where the West Shore tracks come together up the line, why there won't be any objection because they can see themselves just where that is. It doesn't look to me to be more than a mile away. We'll promise to turn back as soon as we get there. Hey?"

"Oh, the very minute we get there," I said.

Then he said, "All right, come on, let's get Brent and Pee-wee."

When we found Brent he said very solemn-like that he thought it was a good idea because when

you hike it's always good to have a destination even if you don't use it.

"Sure, they come in handy," I told him. "And patent, adjustable destinations are the best kind. Look at Columbus how he started for Asia and bunked into the West Indies—he should worry. We're like him only different."

So then we waited for Pee-wee. He always takes longer at breakfast than anybody else, because he has three helpings of oatmeal. By the time he finishes they have the boards all cleared. Pretty soon he came out. Brent and Hervey and I were sitting on the lowest step of the pavilion porch waiting for him. Brent looked at him very solemn over his spectacles and said:

"Sir Harris, we're organizing an enterprise to go on a dangerous exploring expedition. Warde is going stalking so he can't join us. Would you care to join your comrades of yesterday in a most interesting quest? We're going straight to the point."

"What point?" Pee-wee wanted to know.

"Ah, that's the question," Brent said.

"What d'you mean, the question?" the kid shouted.

"The point in the railroad tracks," Brent said. "We think it's about a mile or two off, but we can't say. You've noticed how the West Shore tracks come together away up the line—to a point? Do you realize what that means? The terrible danger to trains at that spot? When a train reaches a place where the two rails come together, what happens to the train? It's terrible even to think of. We're going to follow the West Shore tracks north till we come to that spot and then write a report about it. We're going to see if we can't have it remedied. It's our duty as boy scouts to save life. Will you join us?"

"Now I know you're all crazy!" Pee-wee shouted.

"We knew that yesterday," I told him.

"No wonder Warde won't go," he said; "anyway, he's got a *little* sense since yesterday. Gee whiz, any one that doesn't know there's no end to a circle——"

"Now we know," I said, "but we had to find out. Now we know it's not safe to go around much. So we've decided to go straight after this, haven't we, Brent?"

"Always," Brent said; "we've learned our lesson."

Pee-wee shouted, "Yes, and I've learned mine too, and I'm not going to go."

"Can we depend on that?" Brent said. "I heard a cow was run over at that spot the other day and the neighborhood is filled with chipped beef. Would that interest you?"

"Are we going to be back for supper?" Pee-wee wanted to know.

"Yes and no," Brent said.

"Do you call that an answer?" the kid shouted.

"It's two answers," Brent said. "What more do you want?"

"If you weren't such crazy, insane lunatics," Pee-wee shouted, "you'd know that the reason the tracks kind of go together is because on account of perspective."

I said, "Tell us all about that. Is it the climate?"

"No, it isn't the climate," he shouted. "They don't really do it and that's the cause of it. The nearer you get to it the further away it is because it isn't anyway, only it seems so—gee whiz."

Brent said, "There may be some truth in that.

We'll go and see. I never heard that explanation before. If the thing moves away as we approach, we'll just have to head it off and catch it. Maybe it would be better if we take a roundabout, circuitous course and approach it from beyond."

"It wouldn't even be there then," Pee-wee said, all excited; "you wouldn't see it."

Brent said, "This makes our expedition all the more interesting. Sir Harris has thrown a new light on the subject. If a thing goes away it must go somewhere. It can't go nowhere—that's logic. Nowhere is not a place."

"Why isn't it?" I said. "It's got a name, hasn't it?"

"If it wasn't it couldn't have a name," Hervey said. "If *Somewhere* is a place, *Nowhere* is a place. All I know is the West Shore tracks come to a point away up the line and they ought to be separated. I'm going to hike up there this afternoon. Those who are afraid to go can go any way for all I care."

"I'll go," Pee-wee said, "because I like to go hiking, but I don't subscribe to it kind of."

"He thinks it's a magazine," I said.

"I mean that crazy nonsense," he shouted.

"Oh, that?" I said. "That isn't such crazy nonsense; it's very sensible nonsense. We're going now to ask Mr. Apthorpe for permission to go on our tour of investigation."

"The first thing you know you'll get in trouble," Pee-wee said, "making fools out of the trustees like that. The first thing you know we'll all get sent home on account of Hervey Willetts—getting fresh with trustees like that."

"Was Christopher Columbus afraid to ask Queen Isabella if he could go and discover Columbus, Ohio?" Brent asked him. "We fear not trustees. Look at the horizon! Somebody discovered it or we wouldn't know it's there. Yet it moves away. That's because nobody has ever been smart enough to stalk it. How do you suppose the milkman would ever have discovered the Milky Way or the iceman discovered Iceland if they'd been afraid of trustees?"

"You'd better look out," Pee-wee said, kind of very dark and mysterious. "The first thing you know we'll get sent home on account of all this crazy stuff."

All the while he was following us toward Ad-

ministration Shack—that's where Mr Apthorpe is in the mornings because he opens the mail. The kid wanted to go but he was kind of scared like. Especially he was scared because Mr. Apthorpe is very cross-looking and dignified. We were all laughing the way Pee-wee came along after us, kind of hesitating.

But anyway, I guess Mr. Apthorpe knew about us being crazy—the whole camp knows that by this time. It's getting so up there that if you just mention the word hike everybody starts laughing. Anyway nobody ever gets mad at Brent, not even the trustees. And they only get mad at Hervey to his face—behind his back they have to laugh at him, scoutmasters and all. We should worry about being scared of trustees—they're not as bad as principals anyway. And mathematic teachers.

So then we—*g-o-o-d night*, there goes the dinner gong, I've got to go downstairs to supper. First I have to wash my hands—so long, I'll see you later. Anyway, that's the end of this story—thank goodness, I bet that's what you'll say. Anyway, I should worry because the next story is

worse than this—you'll see. It tells all about that crazy hike to West Shore Point, that's what we called it.

So if you thought this was the last hike story that's where you got left. You can't lose us, boy!

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